

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

Fifth Series, }
Volume XIV. }

No. 1666. — May 13, 1876.

{ From Beginning,
{ Vol. CXXIX.

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PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY BY
LITTELL & GAY, BOSTON.

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WE WERE CHILDREN ONCE.

WE were children when we thought
That the heavens were very near,
And that all our mothers taught
Would to-morrow be made clear;
When we questioned everywhere,
Dreading not a full reply,
When the world was just as fair,
And as distant as the sky.

When the marvels that we dreamed
Waited for our waking looks,
When our fairy-fables seemed
Truer than our lesson-books;
When for all who well had striven,
Sweet the ready garlands grew,
And when sleeping, unforgiven,
Was what nobody could do.

We were children when we feared
Only darkness, never light,
For our troubles disappeared
Always, if they came in sight;
When our love was well had striven,
Ceaseless, natural, unperceived;
When we wondered about death
As a thing to be believed;

When we drew a severing line,
Good from evil, night from day,
On the one side, all divine;
On the other — look away!
When our wrath was swift and sure,
Just because we seemed to know
Nothing wrong could touch the pure,
And our loved ones all were so.

When all weariness of life
Was but waiting for a bliss,
When all bitterness and strife
Could be finished with a kiss;
When all spoken words were meant,
When no promises could break,
When all storms were only sent
For the pretty rainbow's sake.

Over all the lovely scene
Necessary darkness flowed,
Now the years that intervene
Hide that once familiar road.
We remember all the way —
Oh, it was so fair, so dear!
Where it led we cannot say;
But we know it led not here.

For the labour wins no crown,
And the strong hope dies in pain,
And the twilight settles down,
And love comforts us in vain.

We have watered lifeless plants,
Falsehood fills the common air,
Every footstep disenchanting,
There is parting everywhere.

Forest-doors are full of night;
Enter, and the path shall wind
As a string of tender light,
As a living wreath untwined;
Nature wastes no drop of dew,
Past the dying root it flows;
What you did you never knew,
Till there sprang a sudden rose.

Every branch breaks out in song
(All that birds say must be true),
Right grows in the heart of wrong —
Yours the task to let it through!
Every gathered leaf decays;
Wait for one immortal wreath!
What is love with life that plays
To the love that lives in death?

Twilight grows so sweet and clear,
We can tell that morn is nigh,
And our dead have come as near
As our childhood's happy sky.
Did the darkness only seem?
Was it all our own false will?
Was our life a little dream?
Father, are we children still?
Good Words. M. B. SMEDLEY.

ONCE.

COOL salt air and the white waves breaking
Restless, eager, along the strand;
An evening sky and a sunset glory
Fading over the sea and land;

We two sitting alone together
Side by side, in the waning light;
Before us the throbbing waste of waters,
Behind us the sand-heaps, drifted white.

Ships were sailing into the distance,
Down to the lands where the sun had gone;
The rough fresh wind blew o'er our faces,
And the shadows of night crept slowly on.

Is it a dream that I remember —
Some ghost of a hope that will come no
more;
We two sitting alone together,
Hand in hand, on the ocean shore?
Evening Post. MARY ANIGE DE VERE.

From The London Quarterly Review.

CHRISTIAN POPULATIONS IN TURKEY.*

IN Herzegovina the harvest of 1874 was a bad one, and the peasantry foresaw a hard winter before them. The tax-collectors, agents of the officials who farm the taxes, require the agriculturists to keep the crops standing until it suits their convenience to come and levy the tithe due to the sultan, estimating the crops as standing damaged there to be worth the highest Constantinople market-prices. But in one district the tax-gatherer did not come till January, 1875, when hunger had compelled the sale and the eating of parts of the crops. The tax-gatherer estimated the tax at an enormous sum; the people resisted his demands; they were robbed, beaten, imprisoned, and their chiefs threatened with arrest when they complained. Some fled to the mountains of the neighbouring independent state of Montenegro, secure to find shelter among people of the same faith and race. They found the leading Montenegrins at the capital, Cetinje, consulting how to act with reference to a Turkish infraction of boundary rights, and were welcomed as fellow-sufferers. During their absence another district of Herzegovina was roused to discontent and resistance by the arbitrary conduct of the police and by the way in which forced labour was imposed by them. The district authorities reported to their superior, and gendarmes were sent to compel submission. Other neighbouring districts were quiet; but the clergy of some Roman Catholic districts, whose ancient privileges had never been confirmed by the present sultan, stirred their flocks to support the dignity of their religion against threatened inroads on the part of the local authorities.

Just then the emperor of Austria visited his province of Dalmatia, which is peopled by Slavs, the near kinsmen of the Herzegovinians, and borders on Herzegovina to the south-west. His visit had

a political significance in the eyes of the simple peasantry, who hoped that he had come to see how best to help them against their oppressors. He probably had no such aim, but his visit encouraged them nevertheless.

The gendarmes arrived in rebellious Nevesinje at the end of April; the Christians fled to the mountains, their chiefs to Montenegro. The gendarmes went on to Bilec; but here the peasantry offered only a passive resistance to their entering the villages, and refused to appear before the local authority. The flame broke out here on a Christian woman suffering insult at the hands of a gendarme. A pasha, Vali Selim, had already been despatched by the governor of Bosnia to inquire into the result of the emperor of Austria's visit to Dalmatia, and was instructed to give the discontented population the alternative of returning submissively to their homes or of emigrating to Montenegro. They refused to deal with any but an envoy direct from the sultan; being not rebellious against his authority, but compelled to defend themselves, their families, and their property, from his Mussulman officials of the same race as themselves.

It was as yet two small districts only that were involved; few were even interested in their affairs. But the refugee chieftains were inconvenient to Montenegro, and safe-conducts were procured by Prince Nicholas for their return. The Turkish frontier-guards attacked them in spite of their passports, and a second application was necessary to get them across the border. On their return home they were left comparatively unmolested, merely having some of their houses burned, one being assaulted in the bazaar, another killed as he left the court in which he had complained of the assault, another being murdered in his field, and an inn-keeper who had entertained them paying for his hospitality with his life. The authorities made no sign of any intention to punish these outrages, but still there was no general outbreak. Isolated attacks were made on single Turks, and the matter became grave enough to attract the attention of the Porte. Accordingly the

* 1. *The History of Servia and the Servian Revolution, with a Sketch of the Insurrection in Bosnia.* By LEOPOLD RANKE. Bohn. 1853.

2. *Travels in the Slavonic Provinces of Turkey in Europe.* By G. MUIR MACKENZIE and A. P. IRBY. Bell and Daldy. 1867.

3. *Consular Blue-Books.* 1867.

mufti of the Slavic Mussulmans was removed, but not punished, and a very obnoxious bishop, with Turkish leanings, was transferred to a better post. The neighbouring villagers armed themselves, but remained quiet, waiting to see what would happen, doing their ordinary work all day, but guarding the roads at night against any surprise on the part of government. This was about midsummer. At last a conference was held between representatives of the sultan and the people, who also insisted upon the presence of an envoy from Montenegro. The demands made by the peasants were for things promised them by the famous decree or hattisherif of 1857: that Christian women and girls should be safe from Turkish insult; that they should have liberty to exercise their religion; that Christians and Mahometans should be equal before the law; that the excesses of the police should be restrained; that the taxes should be justly and seasonably levied. The Mahometans thought these demands exorbitant, and endeavoured to browbeat the Christians into some abatement of them, but in vain; and when Dervish Pasha, governor of Bosnia, came to add his wisdom to the council, the people demanded further the long-promised freedom from forced labour without payment. The pasha promised to do his utmost to obtain for them their rights if they would lay down their arms, but they said that could only be if they and their Mussulman neighbours were meanwhile separated. The pasha retired to Bosna Serai (or Serayevo), his capital, and the Christians fled with their families and goods to the mountains. The Mussulmans broke into the government store, and armed themselves with breechloaders; the neighbouring districts still holding themselves quietly in readiness. On the first of July some Christians who had been driven from their rough mountain refuges by illness were killed at Nevesinje by the armed Mussulmans; the Christians revenged themselves, and then seized on a band of frontier-guards escorting provisions. The small engagements were repeated, and in one of them a body of Turkish troops took part. This precipitated a general

rising, because the people felt sure that the Porte would now consider them as rebellious against its authority rather than as discontented because its authority did not suffice to guarantee them security of life and property. They applied for help to Montenegro, but were told that it could not be afforded. The truth is that Montenegro cannot venture to help Herzegovina again as she did in 1862-3, unless she is sure that the stronger state of Free Serbia will also take the field, and that the rising is more general than has frequently proved to be the case of late years. Discontents and small rebellions are almost perennial, and have never yet been sufficiently carefully prepared to be successful.

The Mussulman inhabitants of the towns began to be alarmed when all the Herzegovina was in tumult, except one little district round Trebinje on the Montenegrin frontier, and set guards to prevent communication along the Austrian frontier. But the insurgents were not united; no leader had yet appeared among them; and an "advanced radical" agent of a Servian republican society who aspired to the leadership met with only scant courtesy from the native chiefs. The Roman Catholic districts, which had risen in obedience to the Franciscan monks domiciled among them, were persuaded to lay down their arms; the government having been convinced of the power of the clergy, who here, as elsewhere, were anxious rather to maintain their own authority in obedience to Rome than to help forward any movement for the good of their people. Their quiescence divides Herzegovina along the course of the river Narenta into disturbed and pacified districts, the turbulent and larger portion being that towards Montenegro. Towards the end of the month of July it appeared that a Greek-Church official was unwilling to allow his people to join the insurgents, and asked the government for soldiers to help him; but the Mussulmans said that for them and Christians to fight, fall, and possibly be buried together, was an intolerable thing, and so the Christians of that district swelled the numbers of the insurgent army. This was a great blunder on the part of the Turks, as the archimandrite had wide-

spread influence, and his adhesion cemented the Christian forces into a union they would have failed to attain without him.

Help in the shape of ammunition and guns has been sent privately from Montenegro, and some four or five hundred men have come thence to volunteer in the Herzegovinian army, which has, at last, apparently found a head in Lazar Sochicha. But Montenegro has complied with the requirements of international law, and has given the Porte no pretext for the execution of its threat to invade the mountain principality, although it must be obvious to all spectators that a successful attack there would be the quickest way for the Porte to control Herzegovina. But Turkey is in no position to pursue vigorously any object which requires money or good organization, and in her times of greatest strength the Montenegrins have ever proved unconquerable foes to her.

America is said to have offered her cannon on credit, and France has negotiated a loan which will suffice to provide the army with the arms yet wanting to them. Garibaldi has promised help to the Herzegovinians in the spring, and as the Turkish troops want long arrears of pay, and the barest necessities of food and clothing, and are not accustomed to the rigour of a Herzegovinian winter, it is not improbable that in the early months of this year another Christian Slav province of Turkey will have freed itself from the terrible yoke of the Turk, and be either independent or joined to Serbia or Montenegro.

It is true that the Porte has once more reiterated the empty promises with which its Christian subjects have been always familiar since, more than four centuries ago, they first were drowned in the flood of Mahometanism, and which have been thrown like dust in the eyes of Europe especially since 1857. But these "reforms" can come to nothing—they will always be like empty words. The idea of erecting Herzegovina into a separate province when the sultan dares not put any but a Mahometan or a base and corrupt so-called Christian into any of the responsible offices of State there is quite nugatory. He dares not, because whatever pressure

may be brought to bear upon the central government by financial distress and the public opinion of Europe is unfelt by the Mahometans throughout the empire, who cling with furious determination to every privilege and power conferred on them in former times by a religion which treats all but Mahometans as the enemies of God and man, fit only for slavery and abuse.

At the same time, although theoretically it may be said—and it often has been said—that Turkey is peopled by Christians under the heel of Mahometans, it must be clearly remembered that that is by no means the whole of the truth. The truth is more nearly told by an author who says that all the evils which afflicted France before the Revolution must be doubled, and then aggravated by the bickerings and jealousies of Jews, Mahometans, Roman Catholics, members of the Greek Church, and renegades for lucre or safety, embittered as those bickerings and jealousies must be under such circumstances of intense suffering, all this must be imagined before any idea is reached of the condition of the inhabitants of some of the richest and fairest countries in Europe.

Once, in the fourteenth century, these provinces were the great Servian empire, long united in fact by their common descent and common language, and still more by the common faith and by the precious possession of a Bible in the vulgar tongue which is even now intelligible to all the Slavonian populations in Turkey, Free Serbia, and Montenegro, Austria, Russia, and Poland. One of the first printing-presses was set up by a Montenegrin noble, who was made by Charles V. a baron of the Holy Roman Empire for this good work, and who devoted it chiefly to the printing of the Bible and books of devotion. The traveller through those lands can take no more welcome gift in his hand than either the old Slavonic version or that more recently prepared by the American missionaries and distributed by colporteurs of the Bible Society under their superintendence.

The time of union under an emperor was short, for the first who held that name was also the last. The present principal

ity of Servia, Montenegro, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Croatia, Dalmatia, Bulgaria, Albania, Epirus, all the countries from the Adriatic to the Black Sea, acknowledged the headship of Dushan (A.D. 1333-1356), who codified their laws—like the Slavonian emperor of Rome, Justinian—giving supreme legal authority to a national assembly, providing for incorrupt administration of justice, recognizing the institution of trial by jury, regulating the hereditary of property, and equable taxation, and insisting on the necessity of free trade as indispensable for the material progress of the people. Unhappily ambition and the weakness of the Greek empire tempted Dushan to turn longing eyes on Constantinople and the Empire of the East. The Greek emperor invited the Osmanli Turks to cross the Bosphorus and help him against probable attack. Just at that moment Dushan died, and the governors of the twelve provinces of the Servian empire, though for a time they held together against the Turks under the leadership of Lazar, whom they elected to prevent the spread of dissensions among themselves, were without any sufficient connecting links to hold them together after Lazar was killed, and the Servian power was destroyed, at Kossova in 1389.

The genius of the Servs was such as to favour their separation into such portions as were easily conquered and absorbed by the Turks, who were firmly established on the Danube for some half-century before the fall of Constantinople avenged on the Greek empire its base introduction of savage allies to help it against its neighbours of like faith and related race. The Slavonian system of government had its root in the *sadrooga*, or village community, which still flourishes as much as anything can flourish under Turkish rule among the Slavonian populations, and has been of priceless value to a people who, without some such tie to bind men together in country districts, to secure a home for the defenceless widow and orphan, and to preserve family order amidst State disorder, could scarcely have continued to hold apart and keep alive the burning memory of former freedom and greatness. It has been round the hearth of the village-family, numbering members often of five and six generations, that the history of the nation and the exploits of the national heroes, common to all the divided provinces and dear to Christian and to renegade Slav Mahometan alike, have been sung to the monotonous *gusla* and woven into the very being of each Slav from infancy. And

it has been by the influence of the patient elders of the family that the hot indignation of the strong members has been restrained from time to time and reserved to take the best moment for hastening the dawn of better days for the nation.

As of one nation it is still necessary to speak of these people. For though we speak commonly of them as Bosnian, or Servian, or what not, they themselves feel that they are brethren, and do not perhaps sufficiently recognize that their quiet, patient, industrious, somewhat self-absorbed nature is not necessarily fitted to hold together under one head. It may be that they may learn that some form of federation suits them best. One thing seems quite certain,—that though Austria or Russia may plan to absorb fresh Slavonian populations, and may therefore offer aid secretly or openly to insurgent provinces to get rid of the Turk, the Slavs themselves have a very definite idea that they are made, not to be governed, but to govern themselves, and would rise against fresh masters with all the more courage and persistence because they had already freed themselves from the more hopeless and long-endured tyranny. They point with pride and look with the longing rivalry of affection to the steady self-respect and patience of Free Servia and Montenegro, and aver freely that what Slavs have done already Slavs will do again. They remember that the heroes of Slavs have been not so much warriors as law-givers and educators.

Austria has within her borders a considerable Slav population in Croatia, Dalmatia, Istria, Hungary, and Slavonia, and owes much to their support in the troublous times of 1848. At the time of the triumph of Magyar statesmen and the establishment of dualism in the empire-kingdom, the interests of these Slav populations had to give way to the Magyar influence, and it is a serious matter for Austria to see a Slav insurrection on her Turkish border just at the moment when matters are going, to say the least, not smoothly in her dual and divisible government. But her Slav populations, though they do not possess all the rights which Englishmen conceive to be necessities of life, are chiefly Roman Catholics living under a government of the same religion and not without constitutional institutions. Their active sympathies with their kinsfolk in insurrection cannot be either quelled sufficiently to prevent their sheltering the crowds of hungry and naked women, children, and old men who fly across the borders of

Herzegovina, nor does the Austrian government fail to help the poor Montenegrin government to feed those fugitives who are crowding into the little principality. There, Christian and Mahometan sufferers from the war are alike hospitably received, in numbers which sorely tax the resources of the country, and Austria gives about twopence-halfpenny a head per day towards feeding them. In some villages there are three or four times as many refugees as inhabitants, and, as the country might itself be attacked at any moment, help is much needed to save human life. Large numbers of the refugees are without clothing in the bitter winter weather in the mountains, having come from warm sunny plains, and are compelled to crouch together on the bare rocks without shelter and without clothing or sufficient food. The committees formed in London and in Austria for helping in this strait hope to rouse as much sympathy in England for these sufferers, who have none to help, as for the far less pitiable victims of the floods in wealthy France. It may well be kept in mind, too, that, although Turkey is not able to pay her creditors their dividends in full, it has been the strain to collect taxes to pay the half of the coupons due in January that has produced perhaps greater misery throughout Turkey than ever was known. In Asia Minor,—whatever similar atrocities may have been committed in the European provinces,—where the agricultural and grazier population habitually pays sixty-two per cent. of profits in taxes, where droughts have killed off the flocks, and famine and pestilence halved the population, the taxes for these dividends have been gathered by taking from the people the food distributed by the relief-committees and by compelling them to shear their few remaining miserable sheep in the middle of winter. Those who are free from the grief of having helped, by means of the Turkish loan, to prop up such a government as this, may also feel free to help the poor and needy driven by it from home and kindred in Herzegovina.

It is not, then, of the Slavs of Austria nor of the Slavs in Russia that there is question now, but of the Slav populations in Turkey who are in overwhelming majority Christian, belonging either to the Roman Catholic or to the Greek Church, the latter preponderating considerably.

And first as to those yet hidden from western Europe under the name of Turkey. They are the Herzegovinians, the Bosnians, the Bulgarians, the Albanians,

and some Greeks. Roumania and Wallachia, though nominally under the suzerainty of the Porte, are so entirely distinct from the empire and from its struggling Christian populations that they may be left out of account.

The limits of Bulgaria and Albania, as now variously marked on the maps, by no means represent the confines of the districts inhabited by those populations, it having been the policy of the Turk to confuse national boundaries and destroy national associations and traditions as much as possible.

The Albanians, commonly called Arnauts in Turkey, were hill-tribes more or less bound up with the Servs in the time of Servian prosperity, and of allied race, who came down from the mountains, after the fall of that power, to people the plains left desolate by fugitive Slavs. They were Roman Catholics, and the Turkish government was willing to grant to them—as to others of that Church—privileges in the exercise of their religion which seemed unimportant because comparatively few in number. Those who remained in the mountains retained their religion; but those who settled in the plains sought favour with the sultan and gained permission to domineer over other Christians by professing Mahometanism. Among the apostate chieftains was the father of Scanderbeg, who gave his son to be educated by the sultan. The son renounced the Mahometan faith and joined the standard of John Hunniades in Hungary and fought the Turks. After a long struggle at the head of Albanian warriors he succeeded in making himself independent; but his adherents were not strong enough to maintain the dignity of their religion or their nationality, and soon after his death no result of his efforts was left but a fame more widely spread than that of any other leader of the Christians in Turkey.

The descendants of so fickle and unprincipled a people, with the accumulated vices of an apostate race, are become a byword in the neighbouring countries. These are the inhabitants of the northern plains of Albania, and are to be numbered among the Christian populations only because they are near kinsfolk to the Roman Catholic tribes who live a very free and independent life in the mountains whither the Turkish authorities dare not follow them, and because there is a tendency among them to revert to the ancient faith sufficiently marked to make it an open question whether they would not

join and materially help, while they morally embarrassed, any wide-spread rising of Christians in Turkey. Their hatred to the Turk is bitter, while they retain traces of sympathy with Servs even though they do not scruple to oppress them with a lawlessness almost unknown to any other Mussulman official,—if there are shades in that blackness. The southern Albanians have more in common with the Greeks, but are also professedly Mahometan. Both have done as much fighting for as against the Turks, and were, long ago, before their apostasy, the only Christians in the Turkish army in the East. It may be well, *à propos* of the Albanians, to suggest, in few words, the two sides of the question of the Christians in Turkey in relation to the army. Favourers of Turkey remark upon the privilege enjoyed by Christians of immunity from military service, while the Turks and Mahometan populations have to furnish a certain contingent although they dislike military life. The Mahometans are represented as justly jealous of their Christian fellow-countrymen on this point. But the other side of the question is this; that although military reclamations fall heavily upon the Mussulmans, the privilege of going about armed is one which would be gladly purchased by the Christian population at the same price, while the Mussulmans are free from the heavy tax paid by all Christian males above three months old for exemption from military service, a tax which often serves as an excuse for extortion. The sultan has now announced that Christians will be enrolled in the army, but unless it be in separate regiments this promise cannot be fulfilled, since the daily life and habits and morals of Christians and Mahometans are irreconcilable. Perhaps the most cogent proof that Slavonian Christians and Mahometans can never peaceably share one country, is the fact that the former are without blame and irreproachable in the matter of chastity, while the Mussulman, and especially the Turk, allows and practises unbridled license. Among the former women are intelligent, respected, and free, and among the latter are the degraded instruments of loathsome vice. Such light and such darkness cannot dwell together.

The Bulgarians come more completely than the Albanians under the description of Christians in Turkey. Originally brethren of the Servs, with whom they have in common a language which is harsh and rude in their mouths, and soft in the districts nearer to Italian influences, but

which is easily mutually intelligible, and otherwise identical, *as far as vocabulary is concerned*, their period of prominence came earlier, but they fell at about the same time before the Turkish arms. They were only gradually subjugated, and were able to make good terms for themselves, as indeed most people could, the tyranny of the Turk having everywhere grown more and more grinding as lapse of time made him feel more at home, and privileged in his oppression. At first the Bulgarians preserved their autonomy, both in State and Church, paying tribute to the sultan; but some chieftans apostatized so as to share in the power which they found Mussulmans in neighbouring countries arrogated to themselves; some were driven into exile, some were disposed of, and the great blow to Bulgarian independence was dealt just a century ago, when the sultan imposed upon the people a set of bishops belonging to the corrupt patriarchate of Constantinople, creatures of the Turkish government, who buy their sees and recoup themselves at the expense of their flocks. The story is the same for all the Greek-Church communities under the power of the Porte. The Christians suffer as much from the religious superiors imposed upon them against their will as they do from the civil governors and their subordinates. But the subjection of the Bulgarians had not lasted long enough to deprive them of all courage when the resurrection of Greece, of the Moldo-Wallachian provinces, and of Free Servia, gave them spirit to bestir themselves. Early in this century a movement began among them for better education, and now the whole province possesses a most respectable number of schools for both boys and girls, in which the ancient Cyrillic alphabet, the old Bulgarian language, and the early version of the Bible, are carefully taught in order to help forward free intercourse with the neighbouring Servs. The policy of the Porte has been to harass the people by forced immigrations from wilder portions of the empire; but they have steadily held on their way, cultivating the marvellously fertile plains which fall to their lot, and which would make them wealthy under a good government, and with access to European markets. They grow cotton, silk, and corn, in what would be abundance but for oppressive taxation, and leave the Mussulmans to people the towns. In the towns, however, many shopkeepers are Christians, and the taxes are arranged so as to fall most heavily on the trades

and industries usually engaged in by them, and not by Mahometans.

Within the last few years the Bulgarians have succeeded in insisting on the fulfilment of a clause in the hattisherif of 1857, which promised the restoration of their ancient ecclesiastical privileges, and this is a great step towards regaining their civil freedom.

The Mahometan population of Bulgaria has diminished, partly because they are subject to military service, partly because the introduction of steam has well-nigh destroyed some of the industries practised in Bulgaria, such as silk-weaving. The result is that the Mahometans are poorer than even the Christians, only they are still in a position to bully and rob their wealthier neighbours with impunity. The taxes are now raised partially from the Mahometan population, and they resent the injury, and revenge themselves on the Christians, murdering them or taking their lands from them without fear of consequences. For all the professions of mixed tribunals, and the reception of the evidence of a Christian in the courts of law, nay even the device of peripatetic commissioners to see that these provisions are carried out, have been tried and found utterly wanting. It is a point of faith with every Mahometan throughout Turkey, that every Christian is his appropriate victim, and the only Christians who obtain justice, or unjust sentences in their favour, are those who are wealthy and unscrupulous enough to buy the judge and not to be afraid of thus exposing their well-being to possible risks. Of such Christians there are many throughout Turkey, as must needs be after centuries of association with Mahometan morals, and of grinding misery. These Christians are those who dare complain and seek the help of consuls against Turkish courts and officials, and it is they, too, who dare accept the empty dignity of place in the mixed courts. The natural result is that the representatives of foreign powers, who are often men of business, with little time and attention to spare for those who do not obtrude themselves on their notice, send to western Europe such pictures of the Turkish Christian as are enough to make any one question whether such people are not better left to be ground out of existence. A more hopeful, and probably a truer idea is commonly given by those who either travel leisurely, or work among the outlying populations away from the corrupted towns. A whisper of hope and interest is passing now through Bulgaria,

but it is not known that any preparation for revolt is being seriously made. There is a prevalent feeling among the Christians in Turkey, that the populations nearest Montenegro must decisively lead the way, for they can get help; while those bordering on Free Servia cannot reckon on the active sympathy of that government. These down-trodden folk, whose whole thoughts are concentrated on the hope of successful fighting, are scarcely in a position to appreciate the service done to the race by a power which by assiduous efforts to train its subjects in the self-restraint and industrious gradual progress of a constitutionally-governed country, is preparing them to be the fit centre of a Servian federation, or kingdom, — a place pointed out for her by her geographical situation, her steadfast Christianity, and her political experience, combined, and a place more than generously conceded to her by warlike Montenegro. An understanding, if not an actual treaty, exists between the two governments that Montenegro will be well content to fight for and with Servia, and then yield to her the resultant crown, for they are not rival nations, but two brethren helping the rest of the family, and anxious only to do the best for all, without selfish ambition.

Herzegovina and Bosnia have commonly been spoken of together, and they have, as a matter of fact, been under one Turkish governor. The sultan has now appointed a separate governor for Herzegovina, saying that the differences in the constituents of the populations of the two districts render this desirable, there being a larger proportion of Mussulmans to Christians in Bosnia than in Herzegovina. This is said to make it impossible for the sultan to grant to Bosnians all the reforms possible for Herzegovina. But since Bosnia and Herzegovina have repeatedly demanded those reforms which were promised by the hattisherif of 1857 to all the provinces of the Turkish empire alike, it is not easy to see what difference need now be made between these two provinces, one of which is in open organized revolt, while the other is as yet only waiting its opportunity. One great difference, however, there really is, arising chiefly from the greater number of Roman Catholics in Bosnia, who are inclined to direct their efforts towards the end of being absorbed into the Catholic empire of Austria. Herzegovina looks to the heads of her own race.

Herzegovina differed from other branches of the Slavs at the downfall of the

Servian empire, inasmuch as it secured to itself, for a long time, rights of popular self-government, its population feeding cattle on the mountains, as far as possible from the towns where the Turks, here as elsewhere, kept each other in countenance. The sultans, from time to time, confirmed their privileges, and even so late as ten years ago, a native chief was violently superseded in his post of authority by a Mussulman governor. Repeated efforts to destroy the bonds between the people of the province and their old and long-acknowledged native leaders, together with the rapacity of Turkish settlers, tax-gatherers, and officials have caused the reiterated insurrections which have earned for these populations a character for turbulence which the western nations have been unable to conceive that a government could for so long be bad enough to justify. The typical stories told in the opening paragraphs of this paper show them to be the convulsions necessarily precedent to freedom.

The Bosnian nobles hold an ignobly prominent position in the miserable story of Turkish acquisition in Europe. The common people of the country stood as staunchly to their faith as the rest of their brethren; but by some unhappy chance there was among them a class of privileged nobles who preferred apostasy to the loss of position and property, and who at once, when the struggle against the Turkish arms became finally hopeless, declared themselves Mussulmans, and thus, by the law of the Koran, secured fresh and novel rights to ride roughshod over the peasantry. But these shameless renegades did not at the same time learn to love their conquerors, and thus Bosnia has, within her borders, native Christians, groaning under Greek bishops and Mussulman officials; native Christians strongly attached to the Roman Church, and yearning after Austrian rule; native nobility thirsting for the day to come when they may find the use of the carefully-kept title-deeds and badges of nobility coming from ancient days; and genuine Osmanli Turks, who wonder, perhaps, that the people whom Allah long ago gave them as slaves and victims should not placidly submit to have their wives and daughters ravished, their goods plundered, and their kinsfolk murdered, by them in obedience to fate. This Bosnian nobility will, in spite of their tyranny, find it easy to rally round them the Slav people when they adopt the Slav cause as against the Turks; but the solution of the popular troubles in Bosnia

would not be found were such a revolt to bring them success. A popular leader, even from another province, might attract them to his standard by the claim of kindred, and then many would probably profess themselves adherents of the old creed, and in doing so would have to give up many of the privileges which they now possess, simply in virtue of their Mahometanism, while the ancient bond between the hereditary chiefs and their peasantry would soon be enthusiastically renewed under the Christian banner. Of course their profession of faith would be worthless in most aspects; but it would be something gained for them to be merely called Christians, since that would make intercourse with western Christianity natural and obvious, and our religious societies would know how to push their opportunities among them, as well as among the peasants, who even now, amidst their political excitement, are eager purchasers of the books carried round by colporteurs.

And now the survey brings us to the principality of Servia, which alone has kept the name of Servia in European geography. Other districts, commonly known as parts of Bulgaria and Albania, are known to the Slavs as "Old Servia," but that is not a name recognized by the Sublime Porte. This is the largest Slavonic province engulfed by Turkey, and numbers something like a population of a million and a quarter. It is now, after four hundred years of a more utter subjection than any other Turkish province, and then after sixty years of gallant struggle, the free principality of Servia, governed by its hereditary prince, whose peasant ancestor, only two generations ago, headed an insurrection and won the title of prince and a recognition of his right to reign, by the choice of the nation, from the sultan.

In the fourteenth century Servia had already produced the ruling dynasty, and had given name to the empire. Some reason for this preponderance over the neighbouring tribes may probably make itself clear to those who learn that a very complete and typical example of the village-community system overspread the whole of Servia, covering it with a well-ordered population, among whom no differences of rank existed to tempt the possessors into compromise with the invading Turk. These oppressors came and seized fortresses and towns. The people withdrew into the dense oak forests which clothe the undulating country, holding no converse with the Turks, and visited by

them only when either plunder was wanted or gangs of labourers to execute unpaid tasks for the oppressor. Generation after generation here died without ever having seen a town, because the most abject humbling of themselves could not save them from insult and injury at the hands of the Turks, and because it was too bitter to them to see the strongholds of their nation in the hands of enemies from whom it seemed hopeless to try to wrest them. The peasant life was simple. The head of the *sadrooga* apportioned the work among the men and women of the family, and the evenings served for the repetition or chanting of Servian poems, either handed down to keep the memory of empire and of heroes green, or newly composed by some of the many singers of the country, to commemorate more recent deeds of valour against the Turk among some neighbouring tribes. The life was simple, disciplined, and organized in a way which gave the people regulated coherence enough to suffer long, and then, when opportunity came, to prove themselves strong. They did not give up their country without a struggle. The fatal battle of Kossova, now looked back upon as the last final field, did not at the time put an end to their hope and resolution. The young Lazarevitch, successor to Lazar who was killed in that battle, made a treaty with the sultan by which he was to hold his crown in fief; but at his death the Turks declared it was impious to allow a Christian ruler to possess lands so fair, and a Turkish garrison was sent to assert the direct authority of the sultan. The Servs allied themselves with Hungary, and Belgrade, the city of seven sieges, was strengthened, and a fortress built at Semendria, a little lower down the Danube. This great mass of grey stone walls, with its twenty-five towers, was built to command the junction of the Morava and the Danube, looking on the Danube in the direction from which the Turkish hosts must always approach it, and there was built through the whole thickness of the wall a red brick cross, which, the more furiously battered, has only shown the brighter in contrast to the gloomy strength of the stone. A fortress strangely typical of Servian, as of all other, persecuted Christianity, it still remains to remind the people by whose aid and by the help of whose arm they have now regained the freedom to worship God in Christ. For there can be no doubt that it has been the sobriety and patience of Christian faith, darkened and distorted

though it has been, that has been the backbone of the people, and their eagerness now to learn the way of God more perfectly must not be hidden from our eyes by the stories we hear of political struggle and intrigue, nor of social disorder and impurity in Belgrade, whither people of all countries and opinions have flocked, eager to utilize the newly-risen power for their own ends. The heart of the people is sound and steady, and they are guided by a prince who, though young and inexperienced, has already shown himself patriotic, discreet, and firm,—a true Servian. The Bible Society finds ready sale for its wares, and schools have been multiplied over the country ever since it became fairly safe for children to be away from the immediate protection of warlike households.

The alliance with Hungary would probably have been a permanent one, and the Servians might have had no worse a history than the Slavonian provinces of Austria, had not Hunniades told the Servian leader that he should require them to acknowledge the supremacy of Rome — of which the Servians had an extreme horror — while the sultan promised absolute religious toleration and ecclesiastical self-government should they submit to him. The choice seemed easy, and would have been the right one had they had to deal with any but a treacherous power. They still struggled for civil liberty also, but in 1444 the battle of Varna made the sultan master of all but Belgrade, which was held against him by the Hungarians till 1522. The confidence of the Servians in the liberality of the Turks was misplaced. Mahometanism alone was tolerated; the Christian churches, monuments of the piety and architectural skill of generations of princes and people, were used as stables; the peasants were heavily taxed for the support of the *spahis* or military colonists of the sultan, and were subjected to continual *corvées*; every fifth year conscription took their most promising boys to be brought up in the Mussulman faith and fight in the sultan's armies; the land was used almost every year as the route for the Turkish armies in their wars with western Europe, and neither man, woman, nor child, nor houses, nor goods, were safe.

The fall of Belgrade, which marked the triumph of the Turks over the Hungarians, was the signal for even increased extortion and violence on the part of the *spahis*, committed not by virtue of law, but, as it was in the beginning and is now

throughout Turkey, because the Turks are utterly lawless and no central authority can ever ensure liberty and justice in the provinces. For a hundred and sixty years thick darkness covered the land; but at the end of the seventeenth century Leopold of Germany attacked the Turks, and the Servians rose to help him, and in 1718 they were ceded, by the treaty of Passarowitz, to Austria, under whom they had peace for twenty years. They lost no moment of this breathing-space, but made roads, restored churches, and did all they could to repair the losses of former times. But the end came, and Austria, too weak to hold the country against the Turks, had to abandon them once more to their old exasperated foes the spahis. In despair thirty-seven thousand families, headed by George Brankovitch, fled to Austrian territory, on a bargain that they were to have a large amount of freedom in self-government both civil and ecclesiastical, and were in return to guard the Austrian boundaries. The Servs of Austria complain that this bargain was never kept; but with their grievances we have nothing at present to do. They certainly were never in such dismal case as those who remained on the national soil.

As the century grew older, however, the utter subjection of Servia to the Turks brought some good results. The rights of the spahis were more clearly defined, feudal service was no longer forced from the peasantry, and many fought with willingness, if not with enthusiasm, in the Moslem armies. But the spirit of patriotism was not dead. When a reforming sultan ascended the throne and resolved to introduce European tactics and discipline among his troops, the Janissaries rebelled, and among the most insubordinate were those who had long exercised authority in Servia. They set the civil representative of the Porte—the pacha of Belgrade—at defiance, and the order-loving Servians answered to the appeal of the sultan and drove the rebels from the country. At once all Turkey was in an uproar; the sultan had employed “dogs of Christians” to defeat true believers. The Janissaries were at once reinstated, and rode roughshod over Servian and spahi alike. They cried to the sultan in vain, and the result of this falling out among thieves was that the honest Servians began to come by their rights. Belgrade fell into their hands, they claimed the right to garrison their own fortresses, and other rights, and would have received them in return for a yearly tribute had not the rise of

Napoleon's fortunes emboldened his ally the sultan. The leader of this period was Kara or Black George, a peasant of strong character, ruthless determination, and considerable military experience, able in civil matters too, up to the requirements of the people at that stage. He called together the national assembly, or Skoupitchina, appointed a senate, and revived the laws of Dushan.

It is needless to follow the varying fortunes of the struggle, which lasted till Kara George and his senate were forced to fly across the border into Austria, and the sultan's troops set themselves to pacify the country by impaling the native leaders, throwing infants into boiling water and into cesspools in derision of baptism, and other similar modes. The sultan then found in Milosch Obrenovitch, a well-known Servian, a mediator between him and the furious people. Terms were arranged, and in 1815 the treaty of Bucharest gave to Servia freedom of worship, of commerce, of self-administration, of self-taxation for the imperial treasury, of garrisoning her towns, and of administering the estates of such spahis as refused to sell the lands on which in future they were forbidden to live. But Milosch was not proof against the temptations of power. He abused his princely dignity, was driven from the country, and Kara George having been invited to return but having been murdered on the way, Milosch's son Michael was raised to the throne. He was young and untrained, and three years served to show that he could not govern the people. He abdicated, and went to Germany and France to study. The Servians chose as his successor Alexander, son of Kara George; but he also failed to satisfy either the sultan or the people, and was compelled to abdicate in 1858. Milosch was then invited to return, and ruled about a year and a half with some vigour, organizing a national militia almost equivalent to an arming of the entire nation.

On his death his son Michael, now older and wiser, succeeded to a difficulty caused by the remonstrances of the sultan, Austria, and England, against the new militia. Then he was involved by an immigration of fugitives from Turkish oppression in Bulgaria and Bosnia; but he stood his ground, and succeeded in winning for his government the love of the kindred populations beyond his borders, and a steadily growing respect from the great powers. In June 1862 a storm burst over his head which brought him in the end perfect in-

dependence, except so far as concerned the retention of two Turkish garrisons in the country, and an acknowledgment of suzerainty and a tribute to the sultan. This was the treacherous bombardment of the town by the fortress of Belgrade under pretext of a scuffle between a few Turkish soldiers and some youths. The exasperated Servians held themselves in perfect quietness, trusting to Michael's diplomacy and the good feeling of Europe to secure them against the repetition of such an outrage, and their hope was not in vain. Michael continued to develop the resources of the country; churches were rebuilt; schools, primary, and higher, and technical, and colleges and a university were opened; and mines and railways were projected. In 1867 the last Turkish garrison was withdrawn; and now a tribute of £23,000 per annum is the only link between the Porte and the Free Servs of Servia.

In 1868 Prince Michael, who was struggling to keep the balance between a somewhat strong conservative ministry and the liberal, if not radical, demands of his people, was shot down in his garden, as it was subsequently pretty clearly proved, by an agent of the party who wished to bring Alexander Kara Georgevitch back to the throne. His death left a successor who was a minor, but the ministry vigorously held on in the path of improvement, and were able to give a good account when the present prince Milan ascended the throne in 1871. He has established a firm hold on the affections of the people, and the internal resources of the country are being rapidly developed. A large army well trained and armed is ready to take the field whenever the united wisdom and prudence of the government shall let the eager people fly to the assistance of the provinces still under the Turkish yoke. Servia is as yet restrained by the attitude of the great powers, and in the mean while, whether she is to be called upon for warlike activity or for the aid which a consolidated government may give to populations weary after victorious struggle, she is making due preparation and will not be found wanting at the right time.

To Montenegro alone belongs the proud boast that it has never been under the dominion of the Turks, has never been inhabited by them, has never agreed to pay tribute to them, but has kept up a perennial struggle with them ever since the fall of the Servian empire. It is but a little state, and perhaps it owes its independence scarcely more to the hardy vigour of

its sons than to the fact that it consists just of a knot of the Balkans, a place where the native saying is that God, in sowing the earth with rocks, dropped the bag. Its bare rocks and severe climate have always been its strong allies against the Turk, and its inhabitants have never so aggregated wealth around them as to be unwilling to burn homes and crops rather than leave them as prey to the invading Turks when there was nothing left for it but flight to the roughest heights. At first, after the battle of Kossova, the chief of the province of Zeuta owned much of Herzegovina, and fought hand in hand with the Albanians. But Scanderbeg's death left him alone, and Ivo the Black retreated to the mountains which now are the whole of Montenegro. Even the sea-coast had to be abandoned, though only a rifle-shot from the southern limit of the mountains is Bocche di Cattaro, the finest harbour in Europe, the natural outlet for Slav commerce, for which Slavs have longed and fought for four centuries, but which still lies, well-nigh unused, before their tantalized eyes.

For a century the fugitives found their mountains a secure retreat, and their bravery and advantageous position made them desirable allies. Venice was not reluctant to give the right hand of fellowship to the highlanders, and many alliances were formed between the nobility of the two states. But such a friendship was not without its drawbacks; for the Venetian brides lured their husbands to the luxury of their own old homes; and finally, in 1516, the prince of Montenegro left the government in the hands of German Petrovitch, bishop (of the Greek Church) of Montenegro. In his family it has ever since been hereditary, descending first from uncle to nephew, and only in this century going in the usual order of descent, since, in 1852, Danilo resolved to abolish the law of celibacy as incumbent on the prince, and married a Viennese lady whose life was one of far-sighted benevolence, and who did more than perhaps any other to aid the cause of education throughout Slavonian lands, and to steady the course of Slav policy.

Throughout these centuries the story of Montenegro has been purely that of hard-won victory against the Turks. No instance of truce or treaty with the Turks has occurred without its following of treacherous betrayal. In 1703 Peter the Great thought it worth while to secure Montenegro as his ally, but he too betrayed the principality to its enemies.

The Turks came and devastated the country. Venice refused her aid, and paid the penalty of the loss of her provinces from Bosnia to the Isthmus of Corinth, and the struggle ended with a siege of seven years sustained by Montenegro. In the end of last century Russia and Austria began to intrigue against each other for the friendship of the little state, and their rivalry has ever since been a valuable tool in the hands of the rulers of Montenegro. In 1813 Cattaro, which had submitted to Venice, when Ivo retired to the mountains, on the bargain that it was never to be given to any other power, found that Napoleon, as conqueror, had ceded it to Austria. Resenting this, it strove to join the mountaineers, but failed. Prince Daniel had done all he could to help it; and, on seeing that Austria had tightened her grasp on what should have been his seaport, he retired to his little capital of Cetigné, and devoted himself to the improvement of his people. His successor, Peter II., obtained from European powers a frontier treaty, which was the first formal recognition of his country by diplomatists. Under him rapid advance was made in the essentials, though not in the external comforts, of civilization. It will not do to live a less rigorous life till the country is secure from Turkish inroads: but schools were multiplied, roads made, and some barbarous practices in war done away with. The custom of cutting off the heads of dead enemies has not yet been quite given up, because the Turks of the neighbouring lands would misconstrue such humanity as cowardice.

Danilo projected a code of laws, and disregarded all provocations to war with the sultan till an actual invasion compelled him to take up arms; and the victory of Grahovo, in 1858, secured for him a commission of the great powers to fix the boundaries between Montenegro and Turkey. Some fertile districts were awarded to him, but no seaport; and he was not required to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Porte. In 1859 he was murdered, when at Cattaro for his wife's health, and never was prince more deeply mourned. His people flocked down the precipitous zigzag road to Cattaro to demand vengeance when he lay dying; but his message was that they should go quietly home. It was a long time before gay dress or weapons or festive gatherings appeared in the mountains. His successor was the present reigning prince Nicholas, who was only eighteen years of age; but who has vindicated his fitness

for the difficult post by great wisdom and prudence, and by a really ingenious tact in playing Russia, France, and the Porte off against each other when they try to turn to use him as a cat's-paw. He now appears to be waiting until some change in the political horizon shall show that it is time for him to help the rebelling provinces, whom as yet he dares only to help privately, and by receiving their refugees. His people, warriors every one of them with wives and daughters ready and not unaccustomed to give warlike help at need, are eager for the fray, and it is not an undesirable thing that so simple, earnest, brave a people should extend their boundaries. Under Montenegrin skies education is fostered as in all other Serbian communities, all forms of religion are free, and the knowledge of the truth is being spread as might be expected in a country the capital of which contains only a hundred houses, which found purchasers for thirty-two copies of the Bible at one visit thither of a colporteur.

Whether Montenegro or Serbia take temporarily or finally the foremost place, or whether there be formed a federation of the Slavonic populations of Turkey, there is at least, in the struggles of the crushed but resolute people fighting for freedom from gross outrage and the intolerable maladministration of an imbecile government, and for liberty to worship the God of their fathers in public — there is in this struggle a fit subject for the warmest sympathy of English men and women, a sympathy which will find no lack of outlets for its practical expression.

From Blackwood's Magazine.
1895.

CHAPTER I.

"TIME'S up, miss: look alive! First or third?"

"Third."

"All right; here you are!"

A shrill whistle, and the train on the Midland line steamed out of the station. Bertha Fitzherbert, a slender girl with large dark eyes, seated herself modestly in the corner, and settled her tidy little black bag beside her. The pace increased; and out of the dark station — for it was afternoon, and a November day — they emerged into bright light, and Bertha found time to reconnoitre her fellow-travellers. There were only two: a young

lady in deep mourning, with a thick black veil which concealed her face; and an honest-looking stout countryman, whose rounded shoulders and horny hands betrayed him more at home in work-a-day than Sunday clothes.

The train was going very fast, and the young lady in black sat facing the engine.

Bertha bent forward and said in her gentle voice, "Will you not change places with me or sit beside me?"

The young lady looked up gratefully and moved to the seat next to Bertha, the countryman composed himself to sleep, and the train rushed on.

Bertha sat looking out of the window at all the flying objects: trees, hedgerows, lazy cattle, peaceful cottages, all passed like a dream before her blurred and indistinct; through the rushing sound echoed the numerous voices of her home, merry children's laughter, the father's deep voice, the mother's sweet tones — ah, that mother! — down Bertha's cheek stole two large tears and dropped with a pat on her kid glove; her companion gave a little start and watched her anxiously; more visions were stealing past — a great beech-tree, a white pony leaning over the hurdles, two boys with sunny hair and rosy cheeks perched in the highest branches, and some one else caressing the pony's mane as she fed it with chopped-up carrots — voices shouting "George! George!" — and a bright pink flush dyed Bertha's face.

Her companion gave another little start, and watched more closely.

Now came another change — a look as of a sharp, sudden pain, contracted brow, clenched lips, and two more tears, hotter, slower in falling than the former ones. Suddenly Bertha is startled to find some one kissing her once, twice, three times, and a voice repeating, "Please, please, don't cry." She turned round in her astonishment to see the veil thrown up, and the sweetest, prettiest little fair-haired face looking up to her with a quiver in the sensitive lips, as if to say, "I know this is a great liberty; but we are both young girls, so please do not mind."

Bertha smiled through her tears and kissed her warmly. "How good you are!" she said, simply.

"I cannot bear to see you cry; now I will wipe all those tears away. Are you happier now?"

"Yes, thank you, dear. I won't cry any more. Tell me what your name is?"

"Amy Gordon, and I will tell you all about myself if you promise to be happy."

"Do," said Bertha, leaning back with a

sigh; "I shall be so glad to talk to you a little. Are you travelling quite alone?"

"Yes; and echo says, are you?"

"Yes; but I am older than you are."

"Are you sure? I am older than you think; I am eighteen."

"And I am twenty-one; but I have travelled alone several times now, and am no longer frightened."

"That is very brave of you: it terrifies me dreadfully. Mamma always laughs at me for being such a coward. I don't know how I shall get on at Murch Hall," and she sighed.

"Murch Hall! you do not mean that you are going there?"

"Yes, I am. Do you know Lady Murch?"

"No; but I suppose I shall know her, for I am going to be one of her lady-helps."

"Oh, how very, very glad I am! I am going also."

"Really and truly! This is delightful! Have you ever been in service before? can you tell me anything about it?"

"No; I have never been out before," said Amy, gravely. "We all lived at home at Stanton Rectory until my father died. We thought he was very rich indeed, for we always had all that we wanted; but something happened. I will not explain how it turned out that we had only two hundred a year to live upon, and that we must work for ourselves. There are eleven of us, five boys and six girls."

"What did you do?"

"Mary and Joanna are governesses; Meta and Rosie are both married. I was the difficulty, for I did so hate teaching; but I heard of Lady Murch's situation through Miss Belfort — you know whom I mean? — member for Kingtonville; and though mamma only half liked it, she let me come. I am to be pastry-maid; it is such pretty work, and I can do it beautifully now."

"I am to be second housemaid," said Bertha; "and I am afraid I know very little about it; but I suppose one can learn easily."

"Have you had any lessons?"

"Mamma's maid showed me how to make a bed as well as she could; but she knew very little herself, for she had never been anything but a lady's-maid until we were ruined."

"Ah!"

"It was about six months ago. All the children are provided for — we have the great comfort of having rich relations; but we elder ones must work. My two brothers were obliged to leave Éton." Her

eyes filled with tears, but she went on bravely: "I am only to get eighteen pounds a year. I know it is much higher wages than a real housemaid would get, who did not know her work; but it seems very little, does it not?"

"I am to have sixteen, and to rise if I do well," said Amy.

"Well, it will be one burden less for my father at home," said Bertha, cheerfully.

"Yes, that is the great comfort; and I am determined to think it all great fun," said Amy.

"I shall, too, as soon as I can forget Jack's face when he showed me his leaving-books," said Bertha.

"Where are they going now?"

"To Brussels, at first, then Heidelberg, or some other German college. I daresay it will all turn out for the best."

"Of course it will; and how proud you will be of their German and their great mustachios!"

"Freddy did not mind half so much as Jack."

"If you get to be head-housemaid, you will be able to help them."

"Yes; that I know will be my great delight."

"I wonder how much I shall be able to spare of my sixteen pounds," said Amy, thoughtfully.

"About six, I should think; but we cannot judge till we know what our expenses will be."

"I wonder if there is any one else in this train going to Murch Hall?"

"I wonder. It will be very exciting first meeting all our fellow-servants, and a very anxious moment also. Here we are at a station; look at that gorgeous woman!"

The door of a first-class carriage was thrown open with a bang, and a woman stood on the door-step, shouting out, "Hi! hi! you boy! give us a *Women's Parliamentary Journal*. How much?—three-pence?—twopence too much for such a dirty number;" and she drew back her green silk gown and black gloves into obscurity, holding her paper gingerly. Her figure was immediately replaced in the doorway by that of a young man apparently about five-and-twenty, clad in a light-grey shooting-costume,—"Boy! *Times* and *Pall Mall*."

"We shall be glad of some news, sha'n't we, Mr. Herbert?" said the lady in green silk.

"There is nothing in the papers just now," he answered, yawning. "By-the-by, I suppose one sees the papers at Murch Hall?"

"Bless you! of course you do; two took in regular for the servants."

The *Times* twitched, and Mr. Herbert unceremoniously threw himself back and began to read.

"Well," said Mrs. Jones, "I *do* think."

"What do you think?" said the young gentleman, lazily.

"I was thinking that there are some beautiful advertisements this time."

A lady who had been seated quite quietly in one corner of the carriage now suddenly started up—"Excuse me, ma'am," she said; "only for one moment;" and with a dexterous twitch she possessed herself of the *Female Parliamentary Journal*, much to Mrs. Jones's indignation. She endeavored to stretch after it; but the lady in the corner placed a hand of iron on her soft, fat arm, and went on reading and holding her at the same time, murmuring, "I will not detain it a moment—not half a minute, my good woman."

For about five minutes this continued, Mrs. Jones speechless with displeasure. Then the lady loosed her with a suddenness which brought her anger to a crisis, and quite unconscious of offence began speaking in a loud, clear, oratorical tone—

"Sir," she said, addressing herself to Herbert, who, intensely amused, had been watching the scene, "a circumstance has again occurred which has much disturbed my serenity."

"Indeed! I am very sorry to hear it."

"It is these advertisements—these infernal advertisements!"

"Strong language," murmured the gentleman.

"What do you say?"

"I am all attention, I said—nothing else."

"These advertisements that constantly appear in the *Female Parliamentary Journal*—now, what is the *Female Parliamentary Journal*? answer me that. The *Female Parliamentary Journal* is the organ, the mouthpiece of the female parliamentary mind. Now, what is the female parliamentary mind? The female parliamentary mind is the modern soul or essence of politics; therefore political should be its articles, political should be its leaders, political should be its notices, and—political should be its advertisements."

"I am sure the advertisements is beautiful," said Mrs. Jones.

The lady deigned no response, but a withering look. Raising one finger in the air, she continued,—"Now, sir, the fe

males who enter upon the parliamentary career cease to be women in —"

"Hear, hear!"

"What do you say, sir?"

"Only, very true — very true indeed."

"Cease to be women in the commonly accepted sense of that term of opprobrium; they are no longer women, but females — refined, superior, intellectual, full of the cares and responsibilities of empire. Of what possible use can advertisements such as these be to such females? — 'Cash's Frilling, the most durable and satisfactory trimming for ladies', children's, and infants' wardrobes.' Are not advertisements meant to be of use to the purchasers and readers? Should they not be characteristic of the journal in which they appear? Again, 'Hair! hair! hair! Ask your perfumer,' etc., etc. Further on, 'Shoeberry & Co., limited, — Sewing-machines of all kinds.' And look at this! — 'Jenkin's Children's Powders.' What have members of Parliament, what have political journals, to do with these things? leave them to nurses and seamstresses. 'Dr. Bethel's Food for Infants, Children, and Invalids.' It is unworthy, useless, revolting. What have infants to do with Parliament? what part do children and invalids play in the ever-revolving political sphere? — answer me that."

"It does seem extraordinary. May I ask, madam, if you are in the House?"

"No, I am not; but I am agent for this part of the country, and now on my way to Firton for the impending election."

"Indeed! Do you expect much of a contest?"

"A certain John Bullus, Esq., has come forward in opposition to Mrs. Lane — a person of no local weight, but a good speaker; and I hear that he is quite determined to carry the seat;" and she laughed grimly.

"Mrs. Lane has sat before?"

"She was returned without a contest three years ago."

"And you consider her pretty safe?"

"I will answer no indiscreet questions."

"Ahem." Mr. Herbert returned to his paper.

"And may I ask, sir, if you have the distinction of writing M. P. after your name?"

"Not I! I am Sir Joseph Murch's new footman."

"Gentleman-help, you mean?"

"All the same thing."

"Pardon me; in a few words I will endeavour —"

"Firton! Firton!" started the nasal LIVING AGE. VOL. XIV. 702

tones of the Firton porter; and Mr. Herbert, with extraordinary courtesy, jumped up to take down his fellow-traveller's umbrella-case and mackintosh, and draw a bundle of rugs from under the seat.

"Another time we will finish our little talk," she said, as she got out of the train. The station was small, so that Herbert could see a very high smart-looking gig awaiting her. He watched with a mixture of astonishment and amusement the dexterity with which she mounted it, drew a little packet from her pocket, lit a fragrant cigar, and taking the reins from the small groom's hands, drove off down the road.

"That's Miss Highclere," said Mrs. Jones, wiping her brow. "You'll see enough of her; she's always staying with my lady."

"Heaven help us!" muttered Herbert from behind his newspaper.

"Yes, that you will; it was all along of her this new idea of lady-helps — lady-helps indeed! taking the bread out of folks' mouths."

"Now, come, cook," said the young gentleman; "I want to be left in peace."

"All right, footman! I like you a-calling of me — cook," she said, wrathfully; but Mr. Herbert had tucked up his legs, settled his plaid round him, and was apparently in the land of Nod.

CHAPTER II.

It was growing very dark, when Bertha discovered by a glance at her watch that they were due at Merton Junction. The two girls sat holding each other's hands very tightly. A shrill whistle, slackening pace, and the train stopped. "Merton Junction. All change here for Aberville, Charlton, and Dorcaster." And cold and shivering, the travellers bundled out into the raw November mist. The train, with its lights gleaming like crimson eyes, hurried off into the night, leaving four passengers standing a little desolately on the platform.

"I wonder if anything has come to meet us," said Amy, timidly.

"There's a bus here from Murch Hall, if any o' you gents be going there," said a friendly porter. Mrs. Jones pressed forwards, "All right! it's come for me: here, take my bag, and just see the luggage in."

The girls followed her through the station to the door.

"Are you going to Murch Hall?" she asked, tossing her head superciliously.

"Yes, if you please; is there room?" said Bertha.

"Room! yes, there's room enough; plenty of room for you too, Mr. Herbert."

"Now, Mrs. Jones, look sharp," said the coachman, tightening the reins. "You'll come on the box and have a weed, won't you?" he said to Herbert.

"With all my heart."

The little omnibus bounded forwards, steadied itself, and spun along the road at a pace which made the three women hold on by the seats.

"Here we are!" said the coachman, throwing down the reins and jumping off. "Will you come with me, Mr. Herbert, and leave the women-folks to themselves?" Fortunately a helper was ready to stand before the steaming horses, and another to open the omnibus-door and let out the tired travellers. They descended at a small low door, followed Mrs. Jones down a stone passage, and found themselves in a large stone-paved lower hall, out of which opened to the right and left the various very comfortable offices.

Here they were met by a tall old gentleman, somewhat bent by age, with a most kindly expression on his face as he came forward to meet the new arrivals.

"I hope you have done all your commissions, Mrs. Jones," he said.

"Yes, I have, sir, and a busy two days I have had; and I will not say but I shall be glad of my tea now, Colonel Clarence."

"And you must be tired, too," said he, very kindly, to the two girls. "I have ordered your tea at once, and told my lady that she had better not see you till you are a little rested."

"Oh, thank you."

"Colonel Clarence is always addressed as sir," said Mrs. Jones, sharply.

"I beg your pardon," faltered Bertha.

"No, no, come along now, and we will see how we can make you comfortable. Miss Gwendoline," he called out suddenly, "will you show these ladies their rooms?"

"*Sì, signore*," said a voice; and out of the kitchen came a tall girl in a white apron and bib, with a most coquettish cap on her black hair; she put her hands into the little pockets of the apron and danced up to them.

"I hope you will like your rooms," she said, "and, above all, that you won't mind sharing one between you."

"Now don't you be a-putting of them up to —"

"The servants are waiting for you, Mrs. Jones," said Gwendoline, haughtily; and Mrs. Jones departed, wrathfully.

Their new acquaintance led the way up stairs that seemed to be endless — stairs that passed through a stone age, a wooden age, and finally an iron age — and landed our travellers, giddy from the tiny corkscrew ascent, in a sort of rabbit-warren of rooms under the roof.

"This is your room," said their guide, opening a door and showing them a large roomy garret with a sloping roof, two very inviting little white beds, and furniture of polished deal, which shone with rubbing. "And I hope you will be comfortable here; my room opens into it, and I shall come in and see you sometimes in bed. I am so glad you are come."

"We want so much to know what it will be like," said Bertha.

"I will tell you about the servants in half-a-dozen words. Colonel Clarence is the butler, and an old dear he is, always a refuge in times of direful trouble. The housekeeper is my lady herself, for no one else will undertake the job. The cook is Mrs. Jones, and Mrs. Jones is the thorn in the flesh of the establishment; Sir Joseph is philanthropic — Sir Joseph is likewise an epicure. Lady-helps are all very well, but no single lady-help can be found who can cook well. One gentleman-cook appeared, but he asked £500 a year, and could never make a plain pudding without champagne, so he was given up, and Mrs. Jones rules the roast. The kitchen-maids were always leaving till I came, and as I am determined with her, she respects me."

"I hope she will be kind to me," said Amy.

"I will see after you — we are two kitchen-maids, scullery-maid and pastry-maid; my underling is a nice merry schoolgirl, and we have great fun together. Now for you, Miss Fitzherbert — there are three housemaids and a head one; the head is Miss Price: she was once a governess, but failed, as she is such a fidget that no one would have her; she has nerves, and always thinks every one is going to offend her."

"Oh, dear!"

"The two other housemaids are sisters, the Miss Burdens, who took to service by their clergyman's advice, because they were always quarrelling."

"And then?"

"There is Miss Murch's maid, a real civil French lady's-maid who finds it very *triste* to have no companion. Lady Murch's maid is a retired officer's widow, who does nothing but cry — Mrs. Lurgan. Then there are the men. Captain Law-

rence, the coachman, who has only one leg; Mr. Fox and Mr. Herbert, two footmen; Colonel Clarence, butler; Arthur Macdown, Sir Joseph's valet; and a boy who wears yellow stockings—I suspect him of having been a blue-coat."

"Was it Mr. Herbert who came down from London with us?"

"Yes; we have never been able to find a footman to stay as yet, because Mr. Fox will not do a single thing, and the second footman does it all. I hope Mr. Herbert likes work."

They all laughed. "It is all very ridiculous, is it not?" said Gwendoline.

"Very; one does not quite realize it yet."

A comfortable tea was set in the room called the lady-helps' parlour when the two travellers came down-stairs. Colonel Clarence presided, pouring out tea as skilfully as a lady would have done, and supplying them liberally with bread and butter.

"Our regular tea-time is five o'clock," he said; "but I daresay you are just as well pleased to be too late to meet anybody to-night."

Tea over, he advised them to wash up the things, and said that he would now find out whether Lady Murch could receive them. Bertha went to look for hot water, and Amy flew up-stairs for some aprons, highly amused that their work should have begun at once.

They were hard at work with the cups and saucers when Colonel Clarence came back.

"My lady wishes to see you now," he said.

"Can't we just finish this?"

"Miss Gwendoline will do that. Miss Gwen!"

Gwendoline came flying down the passage.

"Can you finish these things, you wild child?" asked the colonel, patting her cheek.

"Oh yes, in a moment!" and pushing back her sleeves she put her hands immediately to their task.

Bertha and Amy felt very shy as they followed the butler up-stairs. The back staircase led out into a large dining-room, the table laid for about twenty people and blazing with lights; they crossed a couple of dark ante-rooms, went down a long corridor, and followed their guide into a large half-lighted drawing-room.

"Will you wait here?" he said, and vanished through another door. They waited about ten minutes, when the door

opened with a rush, and a young lady came in.

"How do you do?" she said cordially, and without shaking hands squatted down on the white fur mat in front of the fire.

"Mamma will be here directly. I am Mary Murch, and I hope we shall be great friends. I am always running in and out of the kitchen, in fact we all are, all day long, much to Mrs. Jones's disgust; but it is great fun."

"I should think it did not advance the work much," said Bertha.

"That is what mamma says; but all the same, if she will carry out these eccentric schemes of hers, she must experience the practical working of them."

"Are all the servants—"

"Servants! ye powers, what an expression! There are no servants in this house; but it is so long to speak of the gentlemen-helps and the lady-helps distinctively, that they have been called among us the Troglodites—a most graceful and classical term. Here is mamma."

The door through which Colonel Clarence had gone was thrown open, and Lady Murch sailed in. It was dark, and the firelight flickered, but Bertha and Amy were aware of a stately presence tending towards six feet high, of yards of Bismarck-coloured silk, of *embonpoint* and shadowiness of outline in the twilight room, and of a deep masculine voice.

"I am glad to see you," she said; "I hope you have been welcomed and made as comfortable as circumstances permit in my abode."

"We have indeed."

"Be seated, and I will endeavour to put before you a few of the theories upon which the general management of this house is conducted." They sat down reluctantly, for Lady Murch's large presence stood looming before them, and she waved aside her daughter's offer of a chair.

"When I first followed the example of so many wiser and better than myself, and determined to select my household from the higher ranks, I began in a manner which it proved impossible to continue, by giving salaries such as gentlemen and gentlewomen might find it worth their while to accept. Sir Joseph rebelled; our fortune is large, but needs must be colossal to support such a tax, so I regret that I cannot offer much more than the ordinary rate of wages—of salaries."

"Forgive me," said Bertha, a little proudly; "but I am inexperienced; my

wages are to be those of an experienced housemaid. I cannot accept so much when my services are not worth it."

"Nor I," said Amy, eagerly.

"Nonsense," said Lady Murch. "You see that the advantage of having refined and agreeable gentlewomen more than makes up for the deficiency of experience."

"But I fear that it will not make better housemaids," said Bertha, smiling.

"That is my affair, and it is settled. Now to continue; at first my wish was that the Troglodites should have a table exactly similar to our own; but again"—and she waved her hand with a stately gesture—"again Sir Joseph rebelled,—in short, it proved too expensive; so I have been obliged to vary the Troglodites' table very little from what it used to be in the days of servants—excellent meat at all times, but not such little luxuries as soups, jellies, creams, sweet-breads, or *entrées*. As it is, I find the consumption of food so much less than it used to be, that that alone takes from the increase of expense of the new system. Then, again, tallow candles."

"Mamma," said Mary, entreatingly, "I am sure that these ladies will mind nothing."

"I hope they will be forbearing," said her mother, graciously. "I regret that I cannot see more of my lady-helps, but I am overpowered with business, being in the chair of so many public meetings and on several committees, besides having (perhaps foolishly) consented to write an article now and then in the *Eve's Magazine*. But there is no want of society, for all the guests staying in the house are as much in the kitchens and offices as in the drawing-rooms. Mrs. Lurgan and the Misses Burden dine with us to-night. To-morrow I hope you will both favour us with your company. I always make a point of inviting a few members of the household every night. Colonel Clarence dines to-night; I confess that always makes me a little anxious, for Mr. Fox is not a very good waiter, and Sir Joseph is very particular. Good night; and pray let me know if you have not everything you wish."

"Yes, I hope you will," said Mary, cordially, as Bertha and Amy left the room.

CHAPTER III.

"MR. STUART, will you take Miss Murch? Sir Frederick, allow me to introduce you to Mrs. Reid; Lady Snow-

don, an old friend of your husband's, Sir Frederick's college friend, Colonel Clarence; Mr. Reid, Mrs. Lurgan," etc.

The guests at Murch Hall passed two and two into the dining-room.

"I hope, my dear Lady Goodchild, that you have good news from Firton," said Sir Joseph, depositing a graceful lady in a chair at his side.

"Yes, thank you, Sir Joseph," simpered the lady; "a fine boy, and doing remarkably well. I said to George Lane, I had seldom seen my daughter, Mrs. Lane, look better; and it is such a good thing to have it over before the election. I feel quite nervous when I think of the flurry of her poor mind."

"She will be unable, of course, to canvass personally."

"I am sure so much the better; for she was sadly overtired the last election; and it is hard work, no doubt."

"Well, we wish her all success. We expect Miss Highclere to-morrow; she arrives by the 11.20 train, but will not leave till the poll is closed."

"Miss Highclere is invaluable. I really think that the county should present her with some testimonial if this seat is carried."

"Take down this fish at once, and tell Mrs. Jones that it is perfectly raw!" shouted Sir Joseph.

The head-footman lounged up. "It is the second time it has happened," he said.

"Tell her it must not happen again, Fox."

"All right!"

"Are you fortunate in your household, Lady Murch?" asked Lord Goodchild.

"Miss Burden, who is sitting next to you, will tell you that we are singularly happy."

"Some of the girls are very giddy," said Miss Burden, abruptly.

"It is a difficult team to drive," said his lordship.

"Team! yes; we have a capital coachman," said Lady Murch absently, for she was watching Fox, who, with a dish handed to Mrs. Reid, had remained for at least three minutes in that attitude listening to Sir Frederick's description of the day's run.

"I think young ladies are quite as difficult to manage as young maid-servants," continued Miss Burden—"they are so flighty; this very morning I had cause to complain of it."

At this moment Mr. Fox recollected himself, and moved his dish to another

lady, and Lady Murch, relieved, returned to her neighbour.

"The difficulties of such a household are very great, Lord Goodchild," she said; "and accustomed as I am to encounter difficulties, I have often felt nearly baffled."

"In what respect? I do not ask out of mere curiosity, for we are ourselves meditating fresh household arrangements."

"Well, to begin with—the difficulty of getting gentlemen-helps. Sir Joseph advertised for a coachman, a butler, and a head-footman at the same time. We had no less than a hundred and fifty-eight applications for the coachman's place, one for the butler's place, and none at all for the footman's. The butler's place was filled by a cousin of my own, who is the comfort of my life," and she looked affectionately at Colonel Clarence, who was deep in a military discussion with Lady Snowdon. "The coachman was selected with great difficulty; the footman's situation was taken by one of the applicants for the coachman's place, who knows more about horses than waiting at table."

"No, no, Sir Frederick!" cried the head-footman suddenly. "You are quite mistaken; she's a capital mare! more going in her than in any in the stables. When Marmaduke came home from Ashton coverts dead beat, Nancy had never turned a hair."

"So you all say, I know, Fox; but I never saw an uglier tumble than she gave young Tom."

"He does not know how to ride her, and——"

"Mr. Fox, will you kindly bring me some grouse?" said Lady Murch's deep voice.

"All right! I forgot. I beg your pardon. Wing or leg?"

"Leg. To continue, Lord Goodchild: one difficulty, of course, is the increase of salaries. It would not, of course, be expected that a lady-help should come to you for the same salary that a servant would; well, of course, they have to learn their work, and during that time extra assistance is absolutely necessary. You will be astonished to hear that at this moment I have sixteen charwomen in the house and five odd men."

"Indeed! Your accounts of difficulty would make me hesitate but for one thing—the enormous increase of wages demanded by servants. They say (and rightly) that they have far more knowledge of their duties, and are worth more than the lady-helps, and do not see why they should

be less well paid: it is the same with men-servants."

"This is again a difficulty: you cannot expect lady-helps to associate with any but gentleman-helps, and these are very difficult to get, being generally an odd set—disinherited sons, dismissed from universities, or wanting in intellect, or thoroughly idle. It is very hard to manage."

"It must be, indeed."

"Cooks have been the worst of all. My cook, Mrs. Jones, insists upon being called a lady-help, and gives herself great airs, though she is but a cook after all; and she makes herself very unpleasant to the young ladies, I am afraid."

"She does indeed," murmured Miss Burden.

At this moment the door burst open, and the coachman came in flourishing a letter in his hand.

"A telegram from Firtan, Lady Murch!" he cried. "Miss Highclere wants me to go there at once; things are going very badly with Mrs. Lane."

"Badly!" almost shrieked Lady Goodchild. "The baby?"

"No, no, the election. Can I go, Sir Joseph? I have told Thomas that you can have the greys if you want them tomorrow; but I don't wish to have Castor or Pollux used; you can do as you like about the mare."

"Very well; you will drive over Miss Highclere to-morrow, will you, after the poll is closed?"

"Yes; I don't mind very much, as it will be dark; but I don't like being seen with her."

"Be off, then? Good-night;" and once more the dinner proceeded quietly.

A bright sunny morning followed a misty night, and when Bertha and Amy awoke from most refreshing slumbers, the panes of glass in their attic were rich with frost-pictures. Bertha could not avoid little shrieks as she plunged into her cold bath, and proceeded to make her toilet with cheeks as rosy as a child's. About eight o'clock the door opened, and some one with a pinched, sour-looking face looked in.

"I'm glad to see you're up, young ladies," said the owner of the face, in a voice which corresponded with her vinegar aspect. "Now, if you'll excuse me, Miss Fitzherbert, your bow is not straight; tie your apron behind, not in front. You, if you please, Miss Gordon, are to run down at once to Mrs. Jones. Now follow me, Miss Fitzherbert."

Bertha obeyed, only watching Amy a

little wistfully as she tripped off downstairs.

"I suppose you know nothing about what you have undertaken?" said Miss Price, as the two together entered a long passage.

"I am afraid not very much."

"Well, this is the housemaid's closet; it has been fitted up as you see, by Lady Murch, to facilitate agreeable society for the lady-helps—here a sofa, there an arm-chair, behind that curtain a recess, a high chair to sit on while washing or rinsing at the sink; charwomen see to the slops, but *we* sluice ewers and basins with fresh water. Miss Murch, good-morning."

Miss Murch entered the housemaid's closet in her riding-habit. "Are you showing that poor child her duties before breakfast, Miss Price? Come, Bertha, (I may call you Bertha, may I not?) you had better come to breakfast first. I am going to breakfast with you, Miss Price, for Gwen and I are going to have a gallop before the 'company' make their appearance, when I shall elegantly nibble toast, decline ham, and sip tea, and be pitied by Mrs. Reid for my delicacy of constitution! Come along."

"Does your mamma approve of these unladylike doings, Miss Murch?—if so—"

"Never mind, come along! it is cold enough to make the very idea of breakfast delicious!" and she led the way down-stairs. The lady-helps' parlour was bright with a blazing fire, on which a kettle sang rapturously; the toast and the bread and butter looked most inviting; the coffee smelt so fragrantly that Mrs. Jones herself could not mar its sweetness, though with dirty poppies in her black cap she looked more vulgar than usual. Gwendoline was half-way through her breakfast, looking radiantly pretty in a dark-green riding-habit; only poor little Amy looked sad and spiritless.

"Miss Murch, I must beg," began Mrs. Jones, "that you will not repeat of taking out my kitchen-helps in this way; it leaves all the hard work to them as is too good for it."

"All right, Jones; give me some ham. Make haste, Gwen; I have not told you that we are to have a cavalier to-day."

"Cavalier! the new footman! and a saucy one he is—not so much the gentleman as we're accustomed to."

"Jones, give Miss Gwendoline the butter at once."

"Here, Gwendoline."

"I said *Miss* Gwendoline."

Mrs. Jones made no answer, but poured out some tea with a jerk.

"We must make haste with the rooms to-day, Eliza," said Miss Agatha Burden to her sister.

"There's no greater hurry than usual."

"Miss Price tells me Miss Highclere is to have the red room; and what with her litter, and smoking, and writing, we shall have our hands full."

"And the red-room dressing-room is to have the bed out and writing-things put in," said Miss Price; "and the walnut room is to be prepared for Mr. Leslie. We shall have the house quite full to-day."

Bertha started violently, but went on with her tea, hoping that no one noticed her rosy cheeks.

"I hear Mr. Leslie comes by the nine-o'clock train," said Miss Eliza. "So thoughtless! I shall scarcely have time to get my breakfast down; for I don't suppose you will be much help," she said, ungraciously, to Bertha.

"I will do my best," she said sweetly.

"Now, Gwen, if you have done."

"Quite done, thanks. Mind, Mrs. Jones, not too much fuss about the pastry at first. Miss Gordon is under my special protection."

And shaking her finger at her chief, Gwendoline followed her young mistress.

"You have not seen the new footman yet, have you?" asked Mary Murch, as they went out into the stable-yard.

"No, not yet. If he is no more amusing than his predecessor, I do not expect much from his acquaintance."

"He is to meet us at the lodge, as he is exercising Marmaduke, and is obliged to let off steam a little before riding with ladies."

"Captain Lawrence must have much confidence in him to let him exercise Marmaduke; why, Mr. Fox himself is never allowed to ride him."

"Oh, he knows what he is about; they are old friends. You know that Captain Lawrence is gone to Firton, so Thomas must mount us."

Another moment, and the two girls were cantering off to the lodge.

"How delicious it is in the early morning!" cried Gwendoline, as, putting their horses on to the grass, they turned across the park. The hoar-frost sparkled like diamonds on every blade, a clear blue mist was between them and the trees, at a little distance the water of the lake looked blue as the depth of the sky, and

two white swans swam haughtily to and fro, aware that their plumage actually dazzled the eye in the early gleams of the sun.

"Alas, that so soon all this sweetness and freshness should be exchanged for the hot kitchen and Mrs. Jones!"

"Don't think of it now; think of nothing but what is bright and joyous. There is the new footman."

"Where?"

Gwendoline shaded her eyes with her hand, and gazed in the direction pointed out; she started suddenly. "Mary, you have deceived me. I will not go."

"What do you mean? Do not turn back; he has not seen us."

"Let me go. I will not stay."

"What do you mean?"

"I will not go. Do you know who that gentleman is, or not?"

"Of course I do; it is Mr. Herbert, the new footman."

"It is Mr. Herbert Montgomery, a very different person; how dare he follow me here?"

"Oh, Gwen, what fun! Is he a suitor of yours?"

"Yes; how dare he?"

"You do not look as if you minded it much," said Mary, archly.

"But I refused him; he has no right to come bothering me like this. Leave my reins; I must go; see, he sees us."

"Then we must join him. Nonsense, Gwen; it is far more dignified."

"I will never forgive you," murmured Gwendoline, as the cavalier rode up.

CHAPTER IV.

"GOOD morning, Miss Murch. Ah!"

"Do not counterfeit surprise, Mr. Montgomery; it is not worth while."

"I vow —"

"Nor vow false vows. I am sorry to see you in such different circumstances. Mary, is it not nearly time to go in?"

"I cannot go in yet. This brute has been eating his head off in idleness, and wants a good gallop." As he spoke, whether by accident or design, Marmaduke reared violently.

"Take care, for heaven's sake! I hope he is not dangerous?"

"Oh no, Miss Murch; see, your friend has stronger nerves;" he said, rather bitterly.

"I have seen you worse mounted."

"Ah, you mean Robin Hood!" he cried, eagerly. "Do you remember that day?"

"It must be time to go in, Mary," said

Gwendoline, impatiently. The new footman turned his back on the two girls, and rode off rather sulkily, Marmaduke quite quiet and subdued.

"He is going," said Gwendoline, in a low, anxious voice.

"Then call him back."

"I can't — I won't; but I wanted, really out of curiosity, to hear what has made him come down to this, for his sister's sake. Is he not a bear? He is always like that."

"Mr. Herbert!"

"Miss Murch."

"Miss Gwendoline wants to ask you a question."

"She must come and ask me in the pantry."

"You do not mean it?"

Gwendoline had touched her horse with the whip, and was speeding home — she would not stand that. In the pantry, indeed! She was quivering with indignation. Mary Murch was quite out of breath when she overtook her at the door.

In ten minutes Miss Murch, beautifully dressed, was sitting between Sir Frederick Snowdon and Mrs. Reid at the ten-o'clock breakfast; and Gwendoline, with her eyes still flashing, her cheeks flushed, and lips curling involuntarily into smiles, was hard at work with the vegetables for luncheon.

"I hate slops," said Miss Burden, querulously.

"Well, call the charwoman."

"I have called her twice, but she is with Miss Price."

"Make Miss Fitzherbert empty them."

"How cross of you! when you know she has as much as she can manage with that Miss Price always after her."

"Well, *please* don't grumble."

"I'm not grumbling; I only said I hated slops." And she walked off with the pail.

"Smoother, please, Miss Herbert, that crease will never do; now, tuck it in nicely. See, there is another crease! Stop a moment, child; that apron of yours will twist round. Now run to the sink and wash out the glasses, and then fill the water-bottles; mind you wipe them well with a clean duster. The dusters are kept in the right-hand middle drawer of — Oh, dear, how dusty that is! Give me the duster; never flick at a thing like that."

Bertha ran away to the housemaid's closet; she found Miss Burden wiping out a ewer and basin, and talking to Lady Goodchild, who sat with Mrs. Reid on the sofa. "Good morning," said the former, graciously, as Bertha made her pretty little

bow. Mrs. Reid stared at her superciliously. Bertha set to her work at once.

"Miss Fitzherbert, come here."

"Yes."

"When you have done, follow me to the red room with the brooms."

"Is that the new housemaid, Miss Burden?" asked Mrs. Reid.

"Yes; and a nice active girl she seems, though she knows nothing about her work; she has never been out before."

"Miss Price is rather severe, is she not?"

"I have nothing to do with Miss Price."

"Indeed! I thought you were second in the housemaids' department."

"We have no heads here, save nominal ones, Mrs. Reid; we choose our own work, and do it at our own time; we could not undertake these offices unless it were so."

"Ahem," said Lady Goodchild.

"Do you mean anything by that?" said Miss Burden, trembling nervously.

"Nothing at all; I am only making observations with a view to starting some such establishment myself," said Lady Goodchild. "Miss Murch, is that you?"

"Good morning, Miss Burden. Lady Goodchild, mamma is going to drive in the pony-carriage, and wants to know whether you prefer going out in the morning or in the afternoon."

"I will go with her now if she wishes it."

"Very well. Will you meet her in the kitchen in about a quarter of an hour? Mr. Stuart and Sir Frederick are there now; they are going with you."

"I will go and dress."

"What will you do, Mrs. Reid?"

"I shall not go out this morning; I will take my work and sit wherever you do."

"Lady Snowdon is in the drawing-room."

"She is a dull old woman; I don't care to sit with her."

"And after mamma is dressed, Mrs. Lurgan has promised to sing — she sings divinely."

"Why can't I come with you?"

"Oh, by all means! only you know I am such a flibberty-gibbet."

"And where do you come from now, flibberty-gibbet?"

"Oh, from down-stairs."

"What part of down-stairs?"

"The regions of the Troglobites."

"Which cave?"

"I was with Colonel Clarence."

"Oh, in the pantry?"

"Well, yes — I was."

"Let me come with you."

"Very well."

Ah non giunge

Uman pensiero!

Al! contento

Ond' io son piena!

sang the kitchen-maid at her work in the kitchen; she danced along with a pie-dish in her hands in the usual white apron and bib. Another voice took up the strain from the pantry — a rich tenor voice —

A miei sensi

Io credo appena

Tu m'af-fi-da!

O mio tesoro!

The kitchen-door shut with a decided bang, and Gwendoline rushed to the fire.

"Stop! stop!" shouted Mrs. Jones. "Don't turn it, you awkward girl; baste it, or it will burn!"

A burst of laughter — Gwendoline turned round her rosy, defiant face.

"Mary, do go up-stairs. How can we do our work with all of you here? Here Sir Frederick has been insisting upon stoning the plums, and has eaten quite half."

"I protest —"

"Useless protestations!" cried Mrs. Reid, with would-be archness. "Please, Miss Gwendoline, if you have any materials, I should so like to make an omelet; I have not made one for years."

Mrs. Jones went on doggedly with her work.

"Instead of that would you whip these eggs for me? There — it is most artistic with a sharp flip and whisk."

"Oh, what fun! Can you lend me an apron?"

"Here — but please don't dirty it; it must last me till Saturday."

"Mayn't I shell peas?"

"No, Sir Frederick, not in November; but if you would copy out this receipt for me, I should be very much obliged."

"I see neither pen, ink, nor paper."

"They are all in the pantry."

"Here is Lady Murch!" cried Gwendoline.

"Good morning, my dear. Has Lady Goodchild come down yet?"

"No, not yet; but she went to dress ten minutes ago."

"If she comes in, Gwendoline, ask her to be so kind as to wait a few moments for me, for I must speak to poor young Herbert for a few moments."

"Is anything the matter, mamma?" asked Mary, demurely.

"No, nothing the matter; but one likes to be kind to any one so unfortunate; it is a sad case of broken fortunes without any culpability on the part of the victim — one of those cases one often reads of, but seldom meets — a most exemplary young man."

"Who told you about him, mamma?"

"Captain Lawrence, an old school-fellow of his. Don't forget my message, girls. Gwendoline, remember you must have a walk to-day; you look flushed."

At this moment Amy came timidly into the kitchen.

"Good morning," said Lady Murch; "I hope you are getting on well, my dear."

"Oh, may I show you my tartlets, Lady Murch? I should so like to do so."

"Do; I should like to see them very much."

Amy eagerly led the way into the still-room.

"Look," she said, gleefully. Lady Murch had a good eye for design. "What a pretty design!" she exclaimed; "I must have it for my flower-beds. Where did you get it?"

"From Villemin. It is a very good one, is it not? Only I should have liked two or three coloured jams; but Mrs. Jones would not let me — she said it was extravagant."

"Well, leave them as they are, and I will send Mr. Fox to sketch off the design quickly, as I daresay you have not time."

"Oh, thank you. I have a good deal to do: there is the paste for the dumplings to be made."

Lady Murch swept out, and Amy went on with her work.

"Miss Gordon!" shouted Mrs. Jones — that lady's voice was never less than a shout.

"Those tartlets must be baked, or they'll never be ready for luncheon."

"I am so sorry, but Lady Murch is going to send in Mr. Fox to sketch them, so they must wait."

"But I tell you they must be done at once."

"I will run and ask Mr. Fox to be quick." Amy sped away to the pantry.

"Oh, please, Mr. Fox," she said, "would you mind sketching the design before it is baked?"

"Oh, ah! I forgot; Lady Murch said something about it. Ring the bell, Herbert. Thanks. When the odd fellow comes tell him to finish cleaning those lamps, etc. I ain't coming back."

"By Jove, that is pretty!" he said, on

beholding the result of Amy's labours; "it inspires me." He drew out of a drawer all manner of drawing-materials, and began making designs.

Amy came to Miss Murch with a very troubled face.

"Please, I beg your pardon; but Mr. Fox was going to draw my tartlets, and instead he is making all kinds of designs, and I do so want to begin to bake them."

"What do you want me to do, my dear?"

"Please get him to leave off, and sketch them quickly; he will attend to you."

"Have you found that out already?" and Mary laughed to herself as she disappeared into the still-room.

"Are those eggs ready, Mrs. Reid?" asked Gwendoline, with her white little hands kneading away in a basin.

"What eggs?"

"The white you were whisking. I can't wait a moment. Oh, please whisk it quicker, or my pudding will be spoilt. Oh, quick, quick! What have you been doing?"

"I got absorbed in the cookery-book, and forgot it. Shall I be in time?"

"Go on, go on!"

"But my hand aches so!"

"Only a minute more! there, pour it in — that's right. Now the sauce-pan — all together."

"Evviva! It is on the fire! 'Saved! saved! saved!' as Tennyson hath it."

"Only just in time," said Mrs. Reid, panting. "I don't know when I have been so flurried."

From The Fortnightly Review.
DUTCH GUIANA.

CHAPTER V.

BUSH-NEGROES.

THE groups that had gathered to greet us as we landed at the large wooden *stelling* in front of La Paix, had an appearance not unbefitting the general character of the place itself. Mixed together, yet distinct, the slender, ornament-circled limbs and cringing gestures of the turbaned coolies by the wharf, contrasted strangely with the sturdy forms and independent demeanour of the bush-negroes, here present in great force, mixed up with the more disciplined creoles, many of whom were, however, scarcely more overburdened with apparel — or, rather, sensible of the want of it — than their maroon

kinsmen around. There was no lack of that general good feeling and willing subordination that characterized the more civilized population nearer the capital; all were cheerful—the coolies, perhaps, excepted, but cheerfulness is not a Hindoo virtue either at home or abroad—and courteous, after a fashion, but somewhat wild.

A painted four-oar boat, with its commodious stern-cabin—the overseer's conveyance—lay alongside the wharf; two broad, flat-bottomed barges were moored some way up the main creek that leads to the interior of the estate; and besides these were a dozen maroon corials, mere hollow tree-trunks, the simplest forms of barbaric invention—survivals, to borrow Mr. Tylor's excellent nomenclature, of a pre-civilized era in river-navigation.

The owners of the corials—tall, well-shaped men of colour, ranging between dark brown and inky black, with a rag at most bound turban-fashion round their bullet heads, and another of scarce ampler dimensions about their loins—muster on the landing-place, and salute the governor with a courteous deference to which the fullest uniform could add nothing. The women, whose dress may best be described as a scanty kilt, and the children, boys and girls, who have none to describe, keep somewhat in the background—laughing, of course; all seem perfectly at home, without strangeness, or even shyness of any kind. Nor, indeed, are they strangers from far off; their villages on the banks of the upper Cottica itself, and of its tributary stream, the Coermotibo, are almost contiguous to the European estates. The main body of the tribe is, however, far away on the banks of the Saara River to the south, where their chief resides, and along the west bank of the Marowynne, the boundary river between Dutch and French Guiana. All this vast region, said by the few explorers who have visited it to be in no respect inferior for its fertility and the variety of its products to the best lands of Surinam, has been made over, partly by express treaty, partly by custom, to the maroons, commonly known as the bush-negroes, the first who in 1761 obtained a formal recognition of freedom and independence from their European masters. Of the entire district they are now almost the sole occupants, undisturbed even by dark-skinned competitors; for the Indian aborigines, believed to have been once numerous throughout these wooded valleys, have wasted away and disappeared, unable not

merely to compete but even to co-exist with their African any better than with their European neighbours. A small Dutch settlement—that of Albina, on the banks of the Marowynne—alone varies the uniformity of negro possession in these lands.

Their mode of life is agricultural; their labour is partly bestowed on the field-produce sufficient to their own personal wants, partly on the growth and export of rice, with which they supply the estates and the capital. But their chief occupation is wood-cutting, and their skill in this department has secured them an almost absolute monopoly of the timber-supply that forms a considerable item in the trade-lists of Surinam. They hew, trim, divide the planks, and do whatever is requisite for preparing the wood for shipment; then bring it down in the form of rafts or boat-loads to Paramaribo, where they exchange it most commonly for arms, powder, cooking-utensils, and other household necessities. Fortunately for themselves, strong drink is not a favourite article of barter among these unregistered and unbaptized disciples of Father Mathew and Sir Wilfrid Lawson. Indeed, in this, as in many other respects, they present an advantageous contrast with the besotted Indians, whose diminution and almost disappearance from the land has been occasioned by intemperance much more than by any of the numerous causes assigned on philo-indigenous platforms. With the negro, on the contrary, drunkenness is an exotic vice, and even where it has been implanted it does not flourish largely on his soil.

Their settlements, far up among the rivers, and in regions said to be admirably adapted for cultivation, though as yet rarely favoured by European visitors, are grouped together after the fashion of small villages, resembling, I am told, in their principal features the more accessible hamlet inhabited by emancipated Congo Africans, and called "Bel Air," near Berbice. Their dwellings are reported to be neat and comfortable enough after a fashion. About fifty of these villages are recorded by name; the average number of souls in each equals three hundred, or thereabouts. The census of the entire bush-negro population is almost conjectural; some bring their numbers down to eight thousand, others raise them to thirty. Of the two extremes the latter is, I believe, the nearest to the truth. Negroes, like other Eastern tribes, when required to give an account of themselves,

are in the habit of reckoning up their men only, omitting the women altogether, and even the male children if still at the breast. Fear of taxation is another common motive for under-statement, especially in the presence of official inquiry. Every village has its chief; his office is partly hereditary, partly elective, and he himself is distinguished from his subjects by a uniform, to be worn, however, only on rare and special occasions—a fortunate circumstance in so warm a climate. He also bears a staff of office. These lesser chiefs are, again, under the orders of the headman of the tribe, who has right to wear, when he chooses—a rare occurrence, let us hope—a general's uniform, and to bear in his hand a baton of rule surmounted by a gilded knob.

Besides the "grand man" of their own "skin," in negro phrase, each tribe enjoys or endures the presence of a European official whom the colonial government appoints under the title of *post-houder* to reside among them, and whose duties chiefly consist in settling the frequent petty contentions that arise between the villagers themselves or their neighbours, regarding rights of property or land. Most other cases, civil or criminal, fall under the jurisdiction of the tribe itself, and are decided by the unwritten code of usage—often sufficiently barbarous in the punishments that it awards; though the cruelest of all, that of burning alive, is said not to have been inflicted on any one for a generation past. It was the penalty especially reserved for sorcerers, and its discontinuance is attributed to the fact that the sorcerers have themselves, like the witches of Germany or Scotland, disappeared in our day. The truth is that the negroes are less superstitious than of old, and having discarded the imaginary crime from their belief, have also discarded the real one by which it was supplemented from their practice—just as the erasure of heresy from the catalogue of sins was immediately followed by the extinction of heretic-burning faggots. The beneficent triumphs of rationalism, so ably chronicled by Mr. Lecky, are not confined to Europe and the European races, and the process of the suns brings wider thoughts to other men than the dwellers of the moorland by Locksley Hall.

Sorcerers, indeed, have, it is said, though from what cause I cannot readily determine, been of all times rare articles among the negro colonists of Surinam. So, too, though the large majority of the bush-negroes are yet pagans—as were their

ancestors before them, when, cutlass in hand, they hewed out their way to freedom—obeah, so notoriously widespread throughout Africa, and, if report say true, not unknown to some West-Indian regions, is scarcely ever heard of among them. Yet, did it exist in any notable degree, it could hardly have failed, by the natural contagion of evil, to have established itself also among the creole blacks, their immediate neighbours and kinsmen, who are, however, in general remarkably free from any imputation of the kind. Nor, again, are the bush-negroes—nowadays at least—addicted to the indiscriminate fetish-worship so often described by modern travellers as prevalent in Africa. Perhaps they may have been so formerly. At present the *ceiba* or cotton-tree, that noblest forest growth of the West Indies, enjoys almost alone, if report says true, the honours of negro worship, avowedly among the maroons, furtively in the creole villages. I myself have often seen the traces of offerings—fowls, yams, libations of drink, and the like—scattered round its stem; the spirit-dweller of its branches, thus propitiated, is said to be of an amiable disposition; unlike its demon-brother of the poison-tree, or *hiari*, also venerated by some, but out of fear. Idols in the strict sense of the term they certainly have none; and their rejection of Roman Catholicism, a circumstance to which I have alluded before, is asserted to have had at least for its ostensible motive their dislike of the image-worship embodied in that system.

I would willingly indulge the charitable hope that the Moravian bush-negro converts may possibly have acquired some kind of idea of the virtue commonly designated, though in a restricted use of the word, by the name of morality. It is a virtue with which their pagan brethren are, in a general way, lamentably unacquainted. On principle, if the phrase may be allowed, they are polygamists; but the frequency of divorce renders, it is said, the dignity of a bush-negro's wife more often successional than simultaneous. Indeed their avowed laxity in this and analogous directions is sometimes asserted, but how truly I cannot say, to be one of the chief hindrances to the increase of their numbers. Without going into the particulars of an obscure and unpleasant subject, thus much is clear, that a child which has for its parents "no father and not much of a mother," a normal condition of things in the bush-negro villages, must necessarily commence the infantile strug-

gle for life under somewhat disadvantageous conditions. To this may be added a total absence of medical practitioners; a circumstance which however might, by a cynical mind, be rather reckoned among the counterbalancing advantages of forest existence.

In form and stature the bush-negroes of Surinam may rank among the best specimens of the Ethiopian type; the men are often six feet and more in height, with well-developed limbs and pleasing open countenances; and the women in every physical respect are, to say the least, worthy of their mates. Ill-modelled trunks and disproportioned limbs are, in fact, as rare among them as they are common among some lighter-complexioned races. Their colour is in general very dark, and gives no token of the gradual tendency to assume a fairer tint that may be observed among the descendants of negroes resident in more northerly latitudes; their hair, too, is as curly as that of any Niam-niam or Darfooree chief, or native of Senegal. I have heard it asserted more often than once, that by long domicile in the South-American continent, the negro type has a tendency to mould itself into one approaching that of the Indian aboriginal; and something of the kind might be looked for, if anywhere, among the bush-negroes of the Surinam interior. But in the specimens that I saw, and they were many, I could not detect any such modification.

Their language is a curious and uncouth mixture. When it is analyzed, English appears to form its basis; next on the list of contributors comes Portuguese, then Dutch, besides a sprinkling of genuine African words thrown in at random; and the thick soft African pronunciation over all. But of this jargon the negroes themselves make no use in writing, for which they employ Dutch, thereby showing themselves in this respect possessed of a truer feeling of the fitness of things than, I regret to say, their Moravian friends, who have taken superfluous pains to translate books of instruction and devotion into the so-called "negro language" for the supposed benefit of their half-tamed scholars — an instance, one amongst many, of being too practical by half.

Fortunately for the bush-negroes themselves, their ultimate tendency in language, as in everything else, is to uniformity with the general creole colonial type; one not of the very highest, it may be, but much superior to the half or three-quarters savagery in which they at present live. Their

little, and, so to speak, accidental nationality, is composed of elements too feeble, and too loosely put together, not to be ultimately reabsorbed into the more vigorous and better-constructed mass to which, though under differing conditions, it once belonged. Old mistrusts and antipathies are fast wearing themselves out in the daily contact with European life; and contact with Europeans never fails to produce, where negroes are concerned, first imitation, then assimilation. So long as slavery lasted, this was of course an impossibility for the bush-negroes; it is now a mere question of time, longer or shorter according to the discretion and tact of the colonial government itself. And we may reasonably hope that the sagacity and moderation by which that same government has thus far always distinguished itself will not fail it in this matter either.

Freedom from taxation and internal autonomy are the special privileges which the bush-negroes in their present condition enjoy; by the latter they set some store, by the former much. On the other hand they are fully aware of the greater advantages and enjoyments of a more settled and civilized form of life than their own, and would sacrifice much to make it theirs. The result of the exchange would be undoubtedly a very beneficial one, not only to the bush-negroes themselves but to the colony at large. Labour is the one great requisite of Surinam; rich in every gift of unassisted nature, she is poor of that which alone could enable her to make a profit of these gifts. In these maroon subjects of hers close at hand she possesses a copious and as yet an unemployed reserve-force of labour, superior in most respects to the coolie or Chinese article, and, which is a main point, cheaper by far. The complete incorporation into colonial life and work of the negro element, now comparatively isolated and wasted in the bush, would add about a third to the progressiveness and energy of Dutch Surinam.

CHAPTER VI.

MUNNIKENDAM.

"Not a word, a word, we stand upon our manners.
Come, strike up." (*Music: here a dance.*)
SHAKESPEARE.

BUSH-NEGROES are fine fellows of their kind; I have seldom seen finer. Indians are, within certain limits, picturesque; Chinese, if not ornamental, are decidedly useful; and coolies, though not unfrequently neither, are sometimes both. But,

after all said, to be innocuous is the Indian's highest praise; and any notable increase in West-Indian lands of "Celestials" is—for reasons not all celestial, but much the reverse—not a thing to be desired; while coolies are expensive to import, and, as settlers, offer but a dubious future. Negroes, with all their defects, are now, as of old times, West-Indian labour's best hope; and since "salt-water" blacks and purchased gangs are no longer to be had, creole negroes must to the fore. In this view, if in no other, they are worth study, and where can we study them better than at Munnikendam?

And here I would like, though I am not going to do it, to insert a sketch of the little village—not so little, neither—near Bel Air, on the way to Berbice, where live the liberated Congoites, or Congoese, or Congonians, rescued by our cruisers from the slave-ships to which they had already been consigned, and brought hither at a recent date. It is a village absolutely picturesque in its details; and what is, perhaps, more to the purpose, it offers to view in itself, and in its garden surroundings, abundant evidence of industry, skill, and the manly independence that lives by its own labour, and is content to live so. Another sketch, too, I would willingly give—that of the new quarter of Paramaribo, the one, I mean, situated on the westernmost outskirts of the town, and called "The Plain of the 13th May." That date last year was the jubilee of the Dutch king's reign, and to celebrate the occasion the governor had offered prizes to the negro workmen who would best excel in laying out the roads and digging the trenches of the proposed suburb. It was opened on the day itself with great pomp and ceremony, and distribution of rewards, by his Excellency in person, and was at once made over to its present inhabitants, a class resembling in every respect the tenants of Bel-Air. A pretty patchwork of cottages and gardens, well-doing, diligent freemen to maintain them in order and comfort, a sight to justify the pride that its originator takes in it, a successful experiment on a small scale, indeed, but arousing a wish for more.

And this is exactly what, not I only, but every landowner, every proprietor, every planter in the colony, would wish to see—namely, a greater abundance of villages and settlements like those just described, only to a wider purpose and on a larger scale. Certainly I have no desire to disparage the good qualities of the slave-descended black creoles, or to join in the

vague outcries, contradicted everywhere by facts, that ignorance, and still more prejudice, have raised against them. But this much must be allowed, that from the very circumstance of being slave-descended, they bear, and long will bear, traces of the deteriorating process to which they have been subjected in the persons of their ancestors, a deterioration not moral merely, but mental, and even physical. In fact, their rapid, though as yet only partial recovery from this very degradation is one proof among many of the wonderful elasticity of the negro character. Hesiod, if I remember rightly, or, if not he, some other old coeval Greek, has said, "When Jupiter makes a man a slave he takes away half his brains from him;" and a truer thing was never said or sung. Cowardice, duplicity, dislike of labour, a habit of theft, sexual immorality, irreflectiveness, apathy—these are the seven daughters of slavery, and they but too often live persistently on, though their ill mother be dead for generations past. Hence the negro who has never been a slave, or who, at any rate, has never experienced that most crushing form of slavery, the organized taskmastership of a foreign and superior race, has a decided vantage-ground, not only over his enslaved fellow-countrymen, but over the descendants of such, on whom his father's sins, and still more the sins of his father's masters, are by hereditary law visited even to the third and fourth generation.

Now assuming that of all races the negro is by physical constitution the best adapted to the South-American tropics, and that negro labour is of all others, not the cheapest merely, but also the most efficient in this soil—both of which are propositions that few experienced planters or overseers will dispute—why not organize migration from Africa to the West Indies after a regular and durable fashion? and as the east-African races are undoubtedly superior alike in mind and body to the western, why not establish an emigration agency on the east coast—why not fix a locality at Zanzibar? Have we not lately closed in principle, and shall soon, by means of our cruisers have closed in fact and deed, the east-African slave-trade, doing thereby a deed worthy of England, worthy of ourselves? True, and we look at our work, and justly pronounce it to be "very good." But what if some of the immediate results of our work, in order to be rightly called "very good," also require careful management, and the dexterity that not only destroys what is

bad, but replaces it by something better? Have we not, while forbidding the further outpourings of the poison-stream that has for ages flowed in tears and blood from the ports of the east-African coast, driven back in a manner the bitter waters to eddy on themselves; and while stopping a recognized outlet of the unemployed and superabundant population, a wasteful and a wrongful one it is true, yet an outlet, created a novel surplus in the inland African labour-market, where violence and captivity are the only laws of exchange and supply? Have we not also, while depriving Zanzibar of its hateful but long-established trade, the trade that alone gave it importance and wealth, curtailed the revenues, and with the revenues the very kingship of one whose patrons we had before consented to be, and whom we had ourselves taught to shelter his authority, nay, his very existence, under our flag?

Now so it is that of both the evils I have indicated, and neither of them are imaginary, a remedy is within easy reach, a remedy not only efficacious with regard to its immediate object, but beneficial in its ulterior results. "Easy reach," did I say? Yes, easy enough if only well-meaning ignorance will stand aside, and have the grace to permit what it cannot comprehend. But this is a piece of good fortune to be wished for rather than hoped, and already I seem to hear a horrified outcry of "negro-kidnapping," "disguised slavery," "slave-trade re-established," and the rest, rising from every platform, and echoed from every bench of the Anti-Slavery Association and its kindred supporters. What! supply the deficit of West-Indian labour by negro importation from the East Coast! give the seyyid, sultan, or sultanlet of Zanzibar, perhaps him of Muscat, too, a nominal patronage and a real percentage of an emigration-agency! load ships with African semi-slaves! bear them "far from home and all its pleasures," to the coasts of Surinam, of Demerara, of St. Vincent, etc.! what is all this but to revive the monster we have ourselves so lately slain, to stultify our own wisdom, annul our own decree?

Nothing of the kind; say rather it is to hinder the brood that the monster has left from coming into life, to confirm the decree of self-maintaining freedom; to complete what else if left imperfect might speedily bring in question the wisdom of our former deeds. It is to transfer, not by compulsion, but by their own free consent, those who, if they remain at home, cannot

by the nature of things be other than slaves or slave-makers, to the conditions of honourable labour, self-support, and security; to bring them into the full possession of whatever benefits organized society and equitable law can confer; to substitute, so far as their own former masters are concerned, a fair and beneficial for an unjust and cruel gain; to bestow on the lands of their destination advantages that no other means, no other colonists can equally secure.

It is certain that, if conducted under regulations and safeguards similar to those provided for the coolie emigrants of Bengal and Madras, and with the same or analogous provisions in matters of engagement, voyage, and occupation, the unnecessary and burdensome obligation of a return passage being alone omitted, east-African emigration would be much less costly, and at the same time much more profitable to the colonies, than Indian or Chinese. The negro is of himself a better agricultural labourer than the Hindoo; he is stronger, healthier, more readily domiciled, more easily ruled, and, an important point, more likely to devote himself to field and country work after the expiration of his indentures. He is also much less disposed than either coolie or Chinaman to swell the town population and the criminal list. I have said that in his case the option of a return passage might be safely omitted, for no negro, the solitary hero of Mrs. Hemans' ballad excepted, has any great longing to revisit his own natal land; his country is not where he was born, but where he is well off; no local worship, no sacred rivers, no ties of caste, draw him back to his first home. In him, therefore, is the best if not the only hope of supplementing the great, the urgent want of the New World, an indigenous population—for the Guiana Indian must unfortunately reckon for nothing, either in number or in available worth—and thus the benefit derived from him as an indentured labourer would be followed by the still more lasting benefit of an acclimatized and a useful colonist. And, to return to our friends of the Anti-Slavery Association, the evidence collected on all hands may surely have convinced the members of that respectable body, that coolie emigration and coolie labour in the West Indies are further removed from hardship, injustice, and slavery, than are too often the means by which our own agricultural labour-market is supplied, or the conditions by which it is governed.

Let them then rest assured that the same system would have no worse result for the east-African negro also.

Enough of this. The subject is one that cannot fail to be taken up sooner or later, not in speculative view, but in experimental practice; till then let it rest. Perhaps the time is not come yet; the very extent of the prospect suggests its distance. But, a little sooner, a little later, not the less surely it will be reached. An African colony, the Arab, has already half peopled the East; an African law, matured in Egypt, promulgated on the shores of the Red Sea, remodelled and re-promulgated in the deserts of the same coast, rules over half Asia this day. Already the Libyan sibyl prepares to turn the next page of her book; its writing is the West. A new creation is wanted here; and creation of this sort is a work not for the European or his half-cousin the Hindoo, it belongs to the elder races. The Aryan of our day, the Indo-German, can elaborate, can perfect, he cannot originate; art-trained, art-exhausted, the productive energy of nature is his no longer. Unmodified by science, unpruned by art, the rough offshoots of the over-teeming African stem are vital with the rude vitality of nature; like her they are prolific too.

Is it a dream? Possibly so; a nature-sent dream, as under the hot sun we float in breezeless calm down the glassy black waters between high walls of reed and forest, bright flowers, broad leaf, and overtopping palm up to the intense heaven all aglow, till here before us on the left river-bank rise the bower-like avenues of Munnikendam. Here let us land, and from the study of the long-settled creole negroes of this secluded estate let us draw, if so disposed, some augury as to what their brethren of the east-African coast, the colonists of our visionary or visioned future, are likely to be in and for South-American Surinam.

This at any rate is no dream. Two hundred and seventeen acres, two hundred and sixty labourers, all without exception negro creole; average yearly produce, seven hundred and fifty hogsheads of sugar, beside molasses and rum; so much for Munnikendam statistics. Machinery of the older and simple sort; factory buildings corresponding; planter's dwelling-house large, old, and three-storied, Dutch in style, with high roof, and fantastic wolves topping the gables by way of weathercocks; a wide double flight of steps in front with a paved space, surrounded by an open parapet before the

hall-door; the garden very Dutch in its walks, flower-beds, and statues; long avenues, some of palmiste, some of areka palm, some of almond-trees, with sago palms intermixed; around a green turfy soil, and a crescent background of cane-fields and forests; so much and enough, I think, for general description. Negroes very sturdy, very black, very plainly dressed, or half-dressed, in white and blue; the women rejoicing in variegated turbans; children *à la* Cupid and Psyche as to costume, though not perhaps in feature, or shape; three or four white men, overseers, straw-hatted, of course; lastly, for visitors, the governor and his party, myself included; such are the principal accessories of the picture. Time, from five or so in the afternoon to midnight or thereabouts; we did not very accurately consult our watches.

Night had fallen; but no—this is a phrase well enough adapted, it may be, to the night of the north, the heavy murky veil slowly let down fold after fold over the pale light that has done duty for days—here it is not so; transparent in its starry clearness, its stainless atmosphere, night rises as day had risen before, a goddess succeeding a goddess; not to blot out the fair world, but to enchase it in a black diamond circle in place of a white; to change enchantment for enchantment, the magic of shadow for the magic of light. But I am anticipating. A good hour before sunset the covered barge of the estate had set us ashore on the wharf, where, with flowers in their hands, songs on their lips, smiles on every face, and welcome in every gesture, the boys and girls of the place received us from the *stelling*. Between this double human range, that like an inner and more variegated avenue lined the overarching trees from the water's edge up to the dwelling-house, we passed along, while the merry tumult of the assembled crowd, and the repeated discharge of the small cannon planted at the landing-place and in the garden mingled together to announce and greet our arrival. The warm although almost level sunbeams lit up the red brick lines of the central mansion, the tall tower-like factory chimneys, the statues in the garden, the pretty bush-embosomed cottages of the estate, and tipped with yellow gold the plummy cane-fields beyond. This lasted some time, till the sun set, and for a little while all was orderly and still in the quiet evening light.

But soon night had risen, and with her had risen the white moon, near her full,

and now the merry-makers who had dispersed to their evening meal reassembled on the gravel-walks and clean-kept open spaces of the garden in front of the dwelling-house to enjoy the sport of the hour; for in the West Indies as in Africa, in Surinam no less than at Damascus, the night is the negro's own time; and no member of Parliament in the latter months of the session, no fashionable beauty in her fourth London season, can more persistently invert the solar allotment of the hours than does the negro votary of pleasure; and wherever and however pleasure be attainable, the negro is its votary.

Group by group, distinctly seen in the pale moonlight as if by day, only with an indistincter background, our creole friends flocked on. The preparations for the dance were soon made. Drums, fifes, a shrill violin, and a musical instrument some say of Indian, some say of negro invention, consisting of a notched gourd that when scraped by a small stick gives out a sound not unlike the chirping of a monster cricket, and accentuates time and measure after the fashion of triangles, were brought from heaven knows what repositories, and with them the tuneful orchestra was complete. The dancers ranged themselves; more than a hundred men and women, mostly young, all dressed in their choicest for the night's sport. The men, with few exceptions, were attired in white trowsers and shirts of various colours, with a predominance of red; some dandies had wrapped gay sashes round their waists, and most had provided themselves with sprigs of flowers, jauntily stuck in their hat-bands. The women's dresses consisted chiefly of loose white sacques, without the cumbrous underlayer of petticoats, or the other "troublesome disguises" that Europe conceals her beauties withal, and reserved their assortment of bright but rarely inharmonious colours for their fantastic turbans, some of which were arranged so as to give the effect of one or two moderate-sized horns projecting from the wearer's head, while other girls, with better taste, left an embroidered end hanging down on one side, Eastern fashion. Many of the women were handsome, shapely figures, full-limbed and full-bodied; but—must I say it?—the particular charm of delicate feet and hands was universally wanting; nor indeed could it have been fairly looked for among a throng of field-laborers, female or male. As to faces, the peculiarities of the negro countenance

are well known in caricature; but a truer pattern may be seen, by those who wish to study it, any day among the statues of the Egyptian rooms in the British Museum: the large gentle eye, the full but not over-protruding lips, the rounded contour, and the good-natured, easy, sensuous expression. This is the genuine African model; one not often, I am aware, to be met with in European or American thoroughfares, where the plastic African too readily acquires the careful look and even the irregularity of the features that surround him, but which is common enough in the villages and fields where he dwells after his own fashion, among his people, most common of all in the tranquil seclusion and congenial climate of a Surinam plantation. There you may find also a type neither Asiatic nor European, but distinctly African, with much of independence and vigour in the male physiognomy, and something that approaches, if it does not quite reach, beauty in the female. Rameses and his queen were cast in no other mould.*

The governor and ourselves were seated with becoming dignity on the wide open balcony atop of the steps leading up to the hall-door, thus commanding a full view of the garden and the people assembled. Immediately in front of us was a large flower-bed, or rather a labyrinth of flower-beds, among which stood, like white goblins in the moonlight, the quaint statues before mentioned, methodically arranged after the most approved Dutch style, and flanked by two pieces of mimic artillery. Such was the centre-piece, and on either side there opened out a wide clear space, clean-swept and strewn with "caddy," the usual white mixture of broken shell, coral, and sand, and in each of these spaces to right and left a band of musicians, or rather noise-makers, squatted negro-wise on the ground. Round these centres of attraction the crowd soon gathered in a double group, men and women, all noisy, animated, and ready for the dance. The moon, almost at the full, glittered bright overhead, and her uncertain light, while giving full effect to the half-barbaric picturesqueness of attire and form in the shifting eddy of white-clad figures, served also to veil from too exact view the defects—and they were many—in the clothes, ornaments, and appearance

* I am glad that so keen and so discriminating an observer as the late Mr. Winwood Reade concurs with this very opinion; in support of which he cites the authority of Livingstone himself. Vide "African Sketch-Book," vol. i. p. 103.

of the performers. Around the garden, and behind it, dark masses of palm, almond-tree, acacia, *saman*, and kindred growths, rose against the sky, loftier and denser in seeming than by day. The whole formed an oval picture of brightness and life amid a dark and silent framework of shadow, a scene part gay, part impressive, and very tropical above all.

The music, or what did duty for such, began. At first it was of a European character, or rather travestied from European — disintegrated quadrilles and waltzes to no particular time. The negroes around, shy as they always are when in the presence of those whose criticisms they fear (for no race is more keenly sensitive in regard to ridicule than the African, except it be, perhaps, the semi-African Arab), did not at once venture to put forth all their prowess, and the performance opened with a few sporadic couples, women dancing with women, men poussetting to men, and either seeming half-ashamed of their own audacity. But as the music continued and grew livelier, passing more and more from the imitation-European to the unfeigned African style of an unbroken monotonous drone with one ever-recurring cadence, a mere continuity of clanging sound, the dancers grew more animated. New couples, in which the proper interchange of sex was observed by the partners, formed themselves, till at last the larger group — that on our left — took up the genuine Ethiopian dance, well known in Oman, and witnessed by me there and elsewhere in the pleasant days, now long since gathered to the ineffectual past, when the East and I were one. A dance of life, where men ranged on one side and women on the other, advance, retreat, cross, join hands, break into whirling knots of twos and fours, separate, re-form in line, to blend again into a seeming maze of orderly confusion — a whirl of very madness, yet with method in it — the intoxication of movement and sound poured out in time and measure. He who has witnessed it, if there yet flow within his veins one drop of that primal savage blood without which manhood and womanhood too are not much better than mere titular names, cannot but help himself up to the influence of the hour, cannot but drink of the bowl, join in the revel; and if any looker-on retains coolness enough to sneer or blame, why, let each follow his bent; but I for one had rather be on the side of David than of Michal, and the former had in the

end, I think, the best of the jest and of the earnest, too.

A Bacchanalian orgie, yet one in which Bacchus himself had no share; Venus alone presided, and sufficient for all beside; or, if Bacchus seemed present to her aid, it was not he, but Cupid in disguise. Half an hour, an hour the revelry continued, while the tumult grew every minute louder, and the dance more vehement, till, with an impulse simultaneous in its suddenness, the double chorus broke up, and blending in one confused mass, surrounded his Excellency the governor, while, amid shouts, laughter, and huzzas, half-a-dozen sturdy blacks caught him up in their arms and bore him aloft in triumphal procession three times round the garden, while others gesticulated and pressed alongside, others danced before, all cheered, and we ourselves, aroused from our Africano-Oriental dream by the local significance of the act, hardly knew whether to laugh or to yield to the enthusiasm of the moment. That the governor, though maintaining as far as possible an appearance of passive dignity and deprecatory acquiescence, heartily enjoyed the spontaneous tribute of affection and loyalty thus tumultuously expressed, I have no doubt, and so would you have enjoyed it, my dear reader, had it been offered you. Besides, he told me as much when, after a tremendous outburst of huzzas, his living throne gently dissolved asunder and allowed him footing on the ground again.

Then after a half-hour's pause, congratulations exchanged, healths drunk, and cordial merriment, in which all shared alike — performers, spectators, Europeans, negroes, and the rest — once more to the dance, but now in calmer measure and to a gentler tune. By this the moon, small and dazzling, rode high in the purple heavens, giving warning of midnight near, when, escorted down to the water's edge by those whose sports we had witnessed, and perhaps in part shared, we reluctantly threaded the dark shades of the avenue river-wards, and re-embarked on our little steamer, that had yet to bear us a mile farther along the current before we reached the night's lodging and rest prepared for us by the district magistrate, in his large and comfortable residence at Ephrata, — so the place was named.

"I wished you to see something of our black creoles as they are among themselves," said the governor, as next morning we pursued our downward way to the river-junction at the Sommelsdyk Fort,

and thence turned off southward to explore the upper branch of the Commeweyne, which we had on our way up passed by unvisited. Deep black, and much more rapid than the Cottica, its current flowed between noble forest scenes, alternating with cultivated spaces on either bank; but few large sugar-estates came in view; plantains, cocoanuts, cassava, with cocoa-bushes intermixed, seemed the more favourite growths. The yearly amount of sugar manufactured in this district does not exceed one thousand hogsheads; the mills are all of the simplest kind, and moved by water-power. In general character, the scenery and water-side objects of the upper Commeweyne nearly resemble those of the upper Cottica, and have been sufficiently described before; a gradual diminution of underwood, an increase of height and girth in the forest trees, and a greater variety in them and in the flowering creepers that interlaced their boughs, being for many miles up country almost the only distinct indications of approach to the higher lands beyond, though the practised eye of a naturalist might doubtless detect many significant varieties in the insects or plants of the region.

And now, as we slowly stem the liquid glass, black as jet yet pure as crystal, of the strong-flowing Commeweyne, we remark (the governor and I) the evident and recent increase in the number of small plantations, to the detriment — though a temporary one only, if events run their regular course — of the larger properties. This is a necessary phase of free labour, and through it the Surinam colony, like every other of like kind, must pass before it can reach the firm ground of self-sustaining prosperity. Till then, nothing is solid, nothing sure. Giant sugar-estates — propped up or absolutely maintained by extraneous capital, and excluding or dwarfing into comparative nullity the varied parcel cultivation of local ownership and resources, are at best magnificent gambling-speculations, most so when the price of their produce is not stored up, but at once applied to widening the enclosures, or purchasing some costly refinements of improved machinery. Establishments like these are every instant at the mercy of a sudden fluctuation of the market, of a new invention, of a tariff — in a word, they lie exposed to every accident of fortune's caprice; and, capricious as she is throughout her whole domain, nowhere is the goddess more so

than in the commercial province. Hence it follows that they who repine at the lengthening catalogue of five-acre and ten-acre lots — railing at their cultivators as idle pumpkin-eating squatters, and raising a desponding moan, occasionally an indignant howl, over the consequent withdrawal of labour from the five-hundred or thousand acre estates — are not more reasonable in their complaints than he who should fall foul of the workmen employed in digging and laying the foundations of the house, and declare them to be lazy loons, and their labour valueless, because they do not at once bestow it on raising the second story and furnishing the drawing-room.

In Dutch Guiana, taking Paramaribo, the capital, for its centre, we may regard the rest of the territory as made up, after a rough fashion, of three concentric circles. The circumference of the innermost one would, for what concerns the east and the districts we have now been visiting, pass through the confluence-point of the Commeweyne and Cottica Rivers at Sommelsdyk Fort; the second would intersect through the estate of La Paix on the upper Cottica, and the corresponding estate of Abendsrust on the upper Commeweyne; the external limits of the third would be correlative with those of the colonial frontier itself. Within the first circle, large estates, mostly owned by Europeans, or at any rate European creoles, predominate. Throughout the second or intermediate circle, smaller properties, mostly in the hands of coloured or black creoles, are more common. In the outermost space are the villages and provision-grounds, few and far between, of the bush-negroes, between whom and the European landholders the dark creoles thus form a sort of link, social as well as territorial; or, to vary the phrase, a connecting medium, destined, if our conjectures be true, to become ultimately an absorbing one, not only of the more savage but of the more civilized element also.

But we are forgetting his Excellency. "In the labourers of Munnikendam," he continued, "you have a fair sample of our black creoles; throughout the colony they are everywhere essentially the same. Fond enough, as you have seen, of pleasure and amusement, when they can get them; but when at work steady, sober, willing, and, what is a fortunate thing for all parties, without a trace of social or political restlessness in any direction. Their

only fault is that there is not enough of them, and what is worse, their numbers do not increase."

Why not? Unhealthy climate, some will say; while others, in concert with a late author, talk in bated breath of gross and ruinous vices, rendering it a question whether negroes should exist on the earth at all for a few generations longer; and others again find in infanticide a third and convenient solution of the question. Let us look a little closer.

And first for the climate. Like British Guiana, its Dutch namesake is a low-lying plain, swampy in some places, forest-grown in others, and far within the tropics; none of them at first sight favourable conditions to salubrity of atmosphere. But where fresh sea-winds sweep over the earth day and night with scarce interrupted steadiness from year's end to year's end, an open plain is healthier by far than the sheltered valleys and picturesque nooks of a mountainous district; and among tidal streams on a tidal coast, the marsh-fevers, that render the moist shores of the stagnant Black-Sea pool scarce less pestilential than those of Lagos itself, find little place. Tropical heat, though here it is never excessive, does not certainly in the long run suit European residents; and at Surinam, where 79 F. is the yearly average—the highest ever recorded being 96 F. and the lowest 70—the climate must be admitted to be a warm one. On the other hand, those who have experience of Africa, the negro's birth-place, or have seen how much the black suffers in, the comparatively moderate chill of winter season in the northern West-Indian Islands, will hardly consider the heat of Dutch Guiana to be too great for the species that forms a good four-fifths of its population.

As to the second-named cause, or collection of causes rather, it is to be regretted that the author of "At Last" should, from ignorance, doubtless, or prejudice, have ever leant such vague and baseless calumnies the sanction of his respected name. Without being either a "clergyman," or even, though an official, a "police magistrate," I have knowledge enough of negro characters and ways to warrant me in asserting, and my readers in believing the assertion, that what is technically called vice is among Africans nearer allied to philoprogenitiveness than among, it may well be, most other races; and without attempting to excuse, much less, as some seem inclined to do, to vindicate the extreme laxity of their theory and

practice in regard of connubial fidelity or maiden virtue, one must allow that their faults in these respects tend much more directly to the increase of the population than to its diminution. And, to have done once for all with a topic the mention of which, though unavoidable, is unpleasant, it may here be added that excess in alcoholic drink—a fault decidedly opposed, as all who have studied the subject know, to the "increase and multiply" of healthy nature—is rare among the black creoles of the Surinam capital, and rarer still, indeed almost unknown, among those of the country. So much for the second cause assigned.

A mere inspection of the yearly birth-rate, averaging thirty per thousand, disposes of the third allegation. Murdered children are not entered on parochial registers, nor do the numbers given leave much margin for kindred crimes at an earlier stage.

And yet the annual death-rate exceeds that of births by at least one per cent., as is stated, and this at the best of times. Some years show two per cent., or even higher. How is this? and if neither climate, nor vice, nor crime be the cause, where is it then to be sought?

But here let some indulgence be asked and given. We are on board a pleasure-boat, and our attention is being called away every moment, now to gaze on a "tall tree by the side of the river, one half of which was in flames," or rather flowers red as flames, and not less bright, "from the root to the top, and the other half green and in full leaf," that might have reminded Geraint and Enid of their Celtic wonderland; now to acknowledge the shouted welcome of bright figures crowding to some little landing-place on the way; now by an opening vista of glittering plantain-groves; now by a tray full of glasses with appropriate contents circulating at frequent intervals round the deck. Amid interruptions like these it must be admitted that profound investigations, statistical columns, and a marshalled array of figures and facts, would be hardly less out of place than a sermon at a masked ball. But it is possible to say truth, and even serious truth, without sermonizing; *ridentem dicere vera* and the rest. We will try.

All have heard, and all who have not merely heard but seen will attest, the fondness of negroes for children; nor their own children only, but any, white, brown, or black—for children generically taken, in a word. Demonstrative as is their

affection, it is none the less genuine; the feeling is instinctive, and the instinct itself is hardly ever absent from among them. I do not put it forward as a matter of praise, I mention it as a fact. If Sir S. Baker's sweeping assertion regarding I forget how many negro tribes, that they have among them no acknowledged form of worship of the unknown, were exact, which it is not, the existence, the universality indeed, of baby-worship at any rate must be allowed, I think, even by that distinguished miso-African. Nor is this species of worship limited to the mother of the babes, or to the womankind at large; it is practised in the same degree by the men, who are not a whit behind the women in their love and care of children, especially the youngest.

But in the very fervour and ecstasy of her baby-worship, the negress-mother persists in worshipping her little divinity irrespectively, recklessly, and by a natural consequence often injuriously, sometimes destructively, to the baby-god itself. Heated from field-work, excited, overdone, she returns in the late afternoon to her cottage, and the first thing she does when arrived there is to catch up her little brown sprawler from the floor and put it to her breast. The result needs no guessing. Half an hour later she is howling as only a negress can howl over her offspring convulsed or dead. Or perhaps, just as she was about to give, in more orderly fashion, the nourishment that the infant has been faintly waiting for some time past, a friend comes in to invite her to a dance or merry-making close by. Off she goes, having made heaven knows what arrangements for the small creature's wants, or it may well be, in her eagerness for amusement, no arrangement at all; purposes to come back in an hour, stays away until midnight, and, on her return home, finds another midnight, the midnight that knows no sunrise, closed over her child. And thus, and more. On over-feeding, injudicious feeding; ailments misunderstood; quack-doctoring — always preferred by the ignorant to all others; on half-superstitious usages, not less injurious than silly; on violent outbursts of passion — the passions of a negress, and of a negro too, are at tropical heat, their rage absolute phrenzy — I need not dwell; suppose what you will, you will be short of the mark. But cease to wonder if, among the most kindly-hearted, child-loving, and, I may add, child-producing race in the world, births, however numerous, are less in computation

than deaths, if one-third, at least, by statistical registration — one full half, if to its records be added unregistered fact — of the negro children in Dutch Guiana die even before they are weaned. The causes, ninety-nine out of a hundred, are those which I have stated or alluded to, and no other.

What is, then, to be done? An evil, or rather an agglomeration of evils like these, that threaten to cut down the main-stem of the future, to dry up the very roots, to destroy the existence of the colony, must be put an end to, all will agree; but how?

There is a remedy, and a very simple one, tried before, and worth trying again. Let us go back in memory to the times when every individual negro life meant so many hundred florins to his owner, when the suppression of the "trade" had cut off the supply from without, and the birth of every slave child on the estate brought a clear gain to the planter, just as its death represented an actual and heavy loss hard to replace, not to the parents only, but to the owner of parents and children too. Negroes and negresses might be never so unthinking then, never so reckless about what concerned themselves alone, but their master took good thought that they should not be careless where his own interest was involved. And in few things was it so closely involved, especially after the treaties of 1815 and 1819, as in the preservation of infant life among the labouring stock, and no precaution was neglected that could ensure this, and supplement the defects of maternal care. Many means were adopted; but the chiefest of all was the appointment on every estate of one or more elderly women, appropriately styled "mammass," chosen from among the negresses themselves, and whose sole duty was to watch each over a given number of infantile negroes, for whose proper care, nourishment, and good condition generally this foster-mother had to answer, and for whose loss, if they drooped and died, she was called to strict account. The history of slave-institutions has been not inappropriately called the "devil's book;" but here, at any rate, is a leaf of it worth taking out for insertion in a better volume.

Now fill up this outline project with the proper colouring of qualifications, provisos, regulations, and the remaining supplemental details of theory wrought out into fact, and you will have a scheme for the preservation of infant negro life, or rather the hindrance of its prodigal and ruinous waste, more likely to succeed in its object

than any that I have yet heard or seen in practice. Then combine these, or similar measures, with a reasonable supply of the two needful things, without which neither Surinam nor any other transatlantic colony can prosper, or, indeed exist — capital and immigration. Not the capital of official subsidy, but of private enterprise; nor the immigration of costly and burdensome East-Indian coolies, or the yet costlier and yet more troublesome Chinese, but of vigorous, healthy, willing east-Africans, the ex-slaves of the Zanzibar and Oman markets. Then put these three requisites together, and stand up and prophesy to Dutch Guiana what golden-aged future you will; nor fear being numbered, in the latter days, among the false prophets — your place will be with the true.

The sea-ebb has set the dammed-up waters of the Commeweyne at liberty to follow their natural bent, and we float swiftly down the stream, admiring, commenting, and enjoying, now the ever-varying, ever-recurring scenes of life and labour, of tropical nature and European energy, of forest, plantation, mansion, cottage, and field that every river-bend unfolds; now the "feast of reason and the flow of soul" — a very hackneyed phrase — as we go; and now more substantial feastings, and the flow of various compositions, very congenial to the Dutch soul and body too, nor less to the English. But the distance was considerable, and night looked down on us with its thousand starry eyes long before we reached Fort Amsterdam and the broad Surinam waters. An hour later we disembarked at the government *stelling* of the silent capital, well pleased with our river-excursion and with each other.

Not many days after I was riding out with the governor on the high-road — that is to say, on the horse-path, for the true high-road here, as elsewhere in Guiana, is by water — leading towards the wooded regions of Para, south-west of Paramaribo, to which, in composition with some other Indian word, it has given its name. Its inhabitants are reckoned, exclusive of bush-negroes, at nearly five thousand; they live in villages, and occupy themselves to some extent in sugar cultivation, but generally in small lots, where grow cocoa, coffee, and plantains; indigo and tobacco are also among the products of the land. The ground is well raised above the water-level — to the south, indeed, it becomes hilly; the forest scenery is said to surpass in beauty, as in extent, that of any other district in the colony. "You can ride for

seven days in one direction without ever getting out of the shade," said the governor, as I noticed the noble outskirts of the woods before us; and he urged on me, almost as a duty, a visit to Para, where, amid the small creole proprietors and the forest-embowered villages, he assured me I should see Surinam negro life to better advantage, witness greater comfort and contentment, act spectator, or sharer, if the fancy took, of gayer festivities than even on the banks of the Cottica and at Munnikendam. But my hank of Surinam thread was too nearly spun out already, and the colours of other lands were now about to take its place in the fate-woven twine.

From Good Words.

WHAT SHE CAME THROUGH.

BY SARAH TYTLER,

AUTHOR OF "LADY BELL," ETC.

CHAPTER X.

(continued.)

As for the sorry falls, which were the great inconsistencies of Dick, with which the heavy doubt of his ever winning Pleasance had a good deal to do, she not only looked on them piteously, they cut her to the heart. It was not that she agreed with the villagers in regarding "going on the spree" as a necessity, or at most as a slight offence, in an unmarried man of Dick's years. Pleasance was too godly, too innately and ineradicably refined for that, though she might inadvertently have stooped a little to the village standard of virtue; but she could not be the person to condemn Dick for sins into which she herself, however unwillingly, led him. She did not believe that these sins were a part of Dick — big, handsome, kindly Dick — who had been on the whole so gentle with Lizzie Blennerhasset. These were spots on the sun, flaws in the jewel, but they were no integral part of Dick.

Once, when Pleasance was in the village, she saw Dick stagger out of the Brown Cow. His gait, the firmness of which she had compared to that of a rock, was wavering and awry. His healthy face had an unhealthy flush, his observant eyes were clouded, a straw hat with a green riband which he was accustomed to wear, poised lightly, and which became him well, was falling back from his head. His speech was loud and bragging, like his

uncle's, but it also had a thick stutter, which the smith rarely acquired, except on specially convivial occasions.

The time was afternoon, and some of the village boys, appearing miraculously from their herding or their apprentice trades the moment a diversion called them, were gathering round Dick, without any sense of the shame of the deed, to make sport of the man who was on ordinary occasions their hero. Women were peeping or coming openly to their doors to look at and to loudly discuss him, men were wagging their heads, some of them thrusting their tongues into their cheeks at a sight which made Pleasance, as she thought of Samson a sport for the Philistines, rush into the first house and hide herself, careless of what people might think or say of her flight.

But Pleasance did not thus escape from the sight of Long Dick in his helplessness and humiliation. Returning sadly to the manor, she encountered him again on the road, this time stretched on the bank perilously near a ditch, sleeping heavily, with Lizzie Blennerhasset, who had limped out after him, sitting crying beside him.

Pleasance sat down and cried to bear her friend company. Her heart was smitten rather with a passion of compassion than with righteous anger. She helped Lizzie to raise his head from the damp grass, she wiped with softness the earth-stains from his hair. She waited till he was fit to be roused, and then she accompanied Lizzie, who was giving him a poor little arm, to support him, that he might walk with sheepish unsteadiness back to the village, and only left them within sight of the first house.

While Pleasance accompanied the two, a dim recollection returned to her of a fragment of gossip which she had heard during the first day's cheese-making, when the girls of Saxford had spoken of one of their number, Car Reeves, spending the hours of her fair day in a neighbouring village, sitting in an alehouse by Harry Owen, trying to get him out; and a pathetic sense of the girl's dog-like fidelity came over her.

Pleasance had been seen lending help, along with Lizzie Blennerhasset, to get Long Dick to a place of shelter, where he might recover from his enslavement, but no one took any notice of her at the moment or pursued her with ridicule then. Something of the sacred privilege which attended bringing home a man on his shield, in the days of old-world warfare, was accorded by the rude villagers of Sax-

ford to the young woman who cared for Long Dick in the weakness of his error.

Only afterwards, there were sundry sly and sardonic comments, and even open advices as to Long Dick, to pluck up spirit boldly, and go in for his prize, since there was no doubt in which direction the wind blew.

But Long Dick did not need sorrow and shame for his outbreak and exposure to convince him that he knew better. "It weren't as if she liked me in that way," he said, "then you might be kinder right. Women, the best on them have big enough hearts to take the chaps that please their fancy, if they are on the square at all, faults and all, and make the best or the worst on en. I a'most think that the women d' be the fonder the more they 'a to pity and forget, since they forget themselves fast. But, bless you, she don't like me as that comes to. I'm none so up in luck, even if I deserved it, she's only full of pity as she's full of friendliness to all the world, because she cannot hinder it. I'm her frien' surely, and she could not see me in the muck without being heart sorry for my plight, and seeking to give me a haul up. There's no laughter of devils or scorn of Pharisees in the likes of her. But that d' be all."

Mrs. Balls was on Long Dick's side. The last six or seven years, which had changed Pleasance from girl to woman, had begun to tell severely on her elderly kinswoman. Mrs. Balls felt her activity leaving her, and age, with its heaviness and incapacity, advancing on her with rapid strides.

The good woman was concerned for Pleasance's welfare, after she herself was past work. Lawyer Lockwood might pension her for old service's sake, but she could not expect that he would keep her on at the manor, when she had ceased to be of use. With her place filled by another, and she and Pleasance removed to some cottage, with its cabbage-garden, in the village, Pleasance's position would be very different, though she could not be brought to see it and take it to heart, and though she would have all Mrs. Balls's savings in addition to her own little bit of money, which Mrs. Balls's squire, Lawyer Lockwood, had said would come due when Pleasance was of age.

On the other hand, if Pleasance gave Long Dick the encouragement, which was all he required, and the two became lovers, and then man and wife, Pleasance, and Mrs. Balls with her, would have a strong arm to work for them and protect them in

the first place; and who knew but that Long Dick, who was head man already, might rise to be whole bailiff, and then Mrs. Dick might take Mrs. Balls's place, and the old home and the old pleasant sense of rule and patronage still be Mrs. Balls's.

Mrs. Balls was conscious, though she could not have expressed her consciousness, that the conclusion would be consistent with poetical justice, that it would be a return such as she was entitled to expect from her young cousin, Pleasance Hatton.

At the same time, Mrs. Balls had no idea of forcing Pleasance's inclinations; for that matter there was no call to force inclinations. Long Dick was the finest young fellow, far or near, and if he forgot himself now and then and got tight, or even had a fight with his drunken companions, why, he was only neighbour-like, and no worse than his betters—than Squire Lockwood's son, for instance, who came over with his cricketing-club, and got roaring drunk at the Brown Cow.

And did not everybody, Mrs. Blennerhasset and Mrs. Morse, say "Long Dick were main soft, and a clean fool about Pleasance"? It was because he was so foolish that he had not always the heart to keep himself straight, because he had got it into his head that his girl would not look at him in the light that he wished.

But if Pleasance would only draw him on, and let him see that she cared for him, and had a mind to be his wife, why then she could twist him round her finger, and make twice a man of him, who was a man already; and she would live to buy all Saxford at one end and to sell it at the other; and Mrs. Balls would go bail that he would not take a glass too much above once a year at the Applethorpe fair, or at the Cheam races, or when there was some extraordinary celebration of events—family or otherwise—at the Brown Cow, during the entire course of his married life.

"It would be so com'fable, Pleasance," urged Mrs. Balls, "if we was all together here, though I ain't favourable to marriage allers. I 'a shown that when I 'a refused offers a many on them in my days, so you need not look sarcy, now that you 'a one of your own to pick or let fall. Still a man about a house as belongs to it, is cheery."

"And what would Lizzie Blennerhasset say?" said Pleasance.

"What 'ould Lizzie Blennerhasset say?"

repeated Mrs. Balls indignantly, "let her say. What right 'a she to say? a silly of a gal as well as a poor little crooked stick, ever to cast eyes on her cousin, and think that because he pulled her out on the fire, he had not done enough for her, but mun stoop to look at she for his wife—set her up! It is impudence, as well as March madness, in Lizzie Blennerhasset, of which her wely own mother is ashamed. Long Dick will never have nowt to say to Lizzie Blennerhasset, though she wait till she d' be ninety-nine, and you give him the go-by to-morrow. You need not make that your excuse, Pleasance. You had better think on it, afore it be too late."

"Does a girl want to think before she will let a man keep company with her?" said Pleasance, using the current phrase of the place.

"Why 'ouldn't she?" inquired Mrs. Balls, a little fretfully, "better think soon nor late."

"Ay, better, Mrs. Balls, but better is not always what happens according to nature, and so there must be something to be said on the other side too."

"Now, you're high flyin', Pleasance, and where be the wings to the fore for folk to foller? That comes on them books. You've been a good gal as has set your back to the wall, and made the best on your hups and downs; but if yer 'ould 'a given up them books with the rest, it 'ould 'a been a sight better for you, and all as has to do with you."

Pleasance wondered if it would have been better, could she have been always and altogether like the others. And sometimes, when the sense and the fear of her loneliness crept closest to her, and chilled and vexed her most, she would wish to be able to think of Long Dick in the way that he and Mrs. Balls coveted that she should think of him, and to believe that she might be happy with him, although there could never be full sympathy between them.

Pleasance was aware that Lizzie Blennerhasset's claim on Long Dick was no claim at all, that Lizzie herself owned freely that it was so, and would never have proposed to urge it against another, yet it counted something with Pleasance both for and against Dick's suit.

This claim of Lizzie's offered a puzzle and a fascination to Pleasance. In all the experience which she had drawn from books more than from life, an unrequited attachment was a thing to be concealed, so that one should die rather than confess

it—to be left to “prey like a worm in the bud” unseen, and unsuspected till the worm had done its worst.

All maidenly dignity and pride demanded that it should be so. True, some of Shakespeare's heroines in the grievous plight, in spite of Shakespeare's words, not only owned the soft impeachment to themselves, but also stooped so far as to allow themselves what comfort could be had, in the circumstances, in the shape of confidants.

However, Pleasance accounted for this by remembering that the world was younger, and might very well be franker and plainer-spoken in Shakespeare's day, and by granting something to the exigencies of plays.

Against this experience Lizzie Blennerhasset, whom Pleasance knew, as she knew herself, to be a modest girl—was it because of her class, or still more because of her misfortune?—made not the slightest attempt to deny her hopeless love for and devotion to Long Dick. That Lizzie Blennerhasset would lay her hair in the dust before Long Dick's feet, was so perfectly well known, as well as so unmistakably fruitless, as to have almost passed beyond discussion in Saxford, which made a favourite hero of Dick and an object of pity of Lizzie.

It was an acknowledged fact to all the Blennerhassets, from father and mother down to Clem, the least gossiping of the family, to be referred to angrily, scornfully, or tolerantly, as the speaker felt inclined, but no more to be ignored than it was doubted.

Of course Long Dick was perfectly aware of Lizzie's love, though certainly in words she never expressed it to him, and was accustomed to have it coolly referred to, and coarsely jested upon by all his friends, save by Pleasance Hatton, who could not help practising the reticence for her friend which Lizzie did not think of practising in any respect save in speech—for herself.

Lizzie could see no shame in her love for her cousin Dick, in her untiring recurrence to the old story of her deliverance when a child from the burning smithy-house by Dick, telling it over and over again to whoever had the patience to listen to her. That deliverance was the central point, the great romance in Lizzie's young life, so that it bulked largely in it, dominated over all the rest, and bound her as Dick's servant and slave forever.

Lizzie dreamt of Dick by day and night, ministered to him in every way that she

could contrive, sewed for him and sedulously attended to his wardrobe in the middle of her dressmaking, schemed to bring him pleasure, as a mother will seek to please her child at the expense of her own ease and comfort, screened him when he was in trouble, and never concealed all the time, either from herself or practically from him or from others, that it was with her very heart's blood that she was thus serving him.

Lizzie had naturally been the very first to see Dick's worship of Pleasance Hatton, but if it gave her a pang, she was so inured to pangs, or rather she was in such an exalted, ecstatic state, like that of a willing martyr with regard to Dick, that she was hardly aware of the pain. She sought to promote Dick's cause with Pleasance; and at the same time it was to Pleasance that Lizzie, unasked, but without a thought of deceit and self-seeking, expatiated fervently, yet with a kind of passionless despair, on her love for Dick.

“Looker, Pleasance, I know when he is in the room without I 'a seed him; I feel when he is a-coming afore he is in sight. I could kiss the wely ground he steps on; there is none as is like he, such a strapping lad, yet so good to a poor sickly cripple gal as is only his cousin and will never be no more, little bettern a plague with her fondness for he. Do 'ee think, Pleasance, if I had not got that fall as did for my hip-joint, and if I had grown up straight and strong, and run about like the others, that Long Dick would ever 'a looked at me? Laws! sometimes I please myself with thinking on it,” said Lizzie, with an inexpressibly wistful look in her blue eyes, “and how he would never 'a needed to beg and pray to me, for I 'ould never 'a said Dick nay, and how mortal happy I 'ould 'a been in making him happy. But there, it's no use thinking on it, it is none for me, it is for you, and you'll do it some day, Pleasance, though you dunno care half enough now for your blessed power, no more nor for your fair face and body, and your know, and your a-coming on gentle-folk as helps to make you as is a true woman, gentle.”

Pleasance was struck and touched by this phenomenon of utterly lowly, utterly generous love that made no demand for return, that had not even a thought of demeaning itself by its own lavish, lightly-held expenditure. Pleasance not only felt that anything which she could ever be to Dick Blennerhasset would be small and poor, but it seemed to her that she could never love—it was not in her to love—

any man, though he were the very prince, the king's son of old romance, come to woo and win her gallantly, with such a love as poor Lizzie Blennerhasset spent without stint on her calmly kind, sometimes unheeding, sometimes half-affronted, half-impatient cousin Dick.

But though Pleasance contemplated the association between Long Dick and his cousin Lizzie with a girl's interest and with a marvel of her own, she had sense and justice to prevent her looking on the association as a barrier to Dick's suit to herself. Lizzie herself deprecated the idea. Thus, while Pleasance would no more have been guilty of stealing a friend's lover, and pluming herself on the theft, than she would have stolen the gown or shawl from some friend's back and boasted of the deed, she admitted the perfect right of the man whom Lizzie Blennerhasset loved, but who was only her cousin and friend, to approach her, Pleasance, with his love.

Therefore, Long Dick ought never to have had brief moments of frenzy against Lizzie, in which he blamed her and would have visited on her the distance which he could not for the life of him lessen, at which he stood from Pleasance Hatton. Happily, they were only moments, not long enough to inflict on Lizzie more than momentary anguish, or to turn Pleasance against him as with horror at his brutality and cruelty.

Long Dick conducted himself generally to Lizzie like a true man who has capabilities for tenderness in his truth, and is well-conditioned at the core. He did not trade upon her regard; he did not accept it with a coxcomb's heartlessness as a tribute to his captivations, far less make a mock of it as a man who would seethe a kid in its mother's milk. Like Lizzie, he could never forget that he had saved her life, and had, with a feeling, even as a boy, of that mysterious bond between them, taken a keener interest after the first days of absolute danger to her life, than any of her family had taken in Lizzie's recovery and well-being. So long as she had been a child, he had carried and wheeled and helped her about in her infirmity, and he had never forgotten her, but had come and sat with her, and brought her little gifts to lighten her weary days. He could not help it, and he supposed that she could not help it, that the girl had got fond of him, he was not to alter his treatment of her—or for that matter his real regard for her on that account.

Pleasance saw and appreciated Long

Dick's forbearance with Lizzie. Thus it was not Lizzie Blennerhasset altogether, or even in a great degree, who stood between Long Dick and Pleasance. And Pleasance certainly did not disdain, though she did no more as yet than suffer his suit. She took it as an honour. She had sometimes a lighter, half-coquettish pleasure in it, for she was a young woman with a woman's desire to be loved. But for the most part she was rather disposed to regard it as a difficult problem, which was set her to solve.

CHAPTER XI.

THE INHERITANCE.

"HERE, Pleasance, I 'a brought a letter for you," said Mrs. Balls, coming into the manor kitchen on her return from an afternoon errand to and gossip in Saxford during the slack season of the fall, a month or two after midsummer. She was so impressed with the importance of what she carried, that though she was short-winded in walking, she made her voice be heard in a panting cry outside the door, and entered holding out the letter, well covered by her ample fingers clad in silk gloves, in a nice distinction between the kid of a lady and the cotton of a working woman, neither of which was quite suitable to Mrs. Balls, who was a housekeeper in a respectable situation under Lawyer Lockwood.

"A letter for me!" said Pleasance, pausing as she took the offered letter, and staring at it as if she had been a South Sea islander, who, having never learnt to write, and having never had any communication made to her by such signs, looks upon their embodiment in a bit of soiled paper with suspicion and uneasiness.

"It be," answered Mrs. Balls succinctly. "I 'a got it from the post-office. Post-master calls me in as I was a passin', and says he, 'There is a big un for your Miss Hatton,' he says, and I says, 'Be there no mistake, Mister Case? for Pleasance do not be in the way of gettin' letters, havin no kith or kin she owns saving myself,' and he answers, 'There be no mistake; do you think I cannot read and write, missus? It would be as much as my place were worth an I couldn't, and how do you know who Miss Hatton may or may not correspond with?' he says, with a kinder wink as a joke atween he and me. But I up and tells him I were sure to know as you were a born lady, and had no mean, shufflin', deceivin' ways. I showed the letter to Missus Graylin' next,

and she at me in the same line. 'It will be sweethearting she'll be arter,' she says, 'and you had better be arter her,' says she, 'for them half-breeds are the wust to deal with;' and I says to that, 'Missus Graylin', I know Pleasance Hatton, child and gal, bessn I know you, and her is not half-breed. She d' be a lady by birth, to be sure, but she is bessn than that, an honest young 'oman as is proud to work for her bread honest like, and 'ould scorn a dirty trick to cheat her cousin and frien'——'"

Mrs. Balls took breath, and resumed the thread of her discourse.

"'More than that, Long Dick is lookin' arter her,' I says, 'and none other, and he do not be so great a hand with his pen as to take to it, rather than speak to the gal in the porch, or by the haystack, or when the hosses and the cattle are a-watering at the troughs, as he may do any day in his life. Long Dick is not such a book-learned fool as to try a dead goose's quill or a bit on sharpened steel when he can speak with the livin' lip, to the livin' ear.'"

Pleasance had heard very little of the great sensation and discussion which her letter had provoked. She was absorbed in the effect which it produced on herself.

Strangely enough, it was the first letter which she had received since she came to the manor. It was like a waif and stray from the past, and she sat with it in her hand, thinking how she used to feel when her father's American letters came, or when some schoolgirl home for the holidays had a thought of her absent companion, who was so much less happy than she, inasmuch as she had no home holidays, and so spared a moment to write a little letter, half prattling, half slap-dash, in which there were a great many errors, seeing that there was no Miss Smith or Miss Eckhard at hand to correct them, but which was to cheer Pleasance in her perpetual exile. If it had struck Pleasance that her present letter was not so much a relic as an effort at the renewal of the past, she would have shrunk from it. When at last she opened it, and glanced over it, she put it hastily down, with a strong revulsion.

"It is not intended for me," she said to Mrs. Balls, who was waiting in her bonnet and shawl, without the smallest pretence of going out of the way, or of not caring to hear, or indeed of expecting anything else than that the letter should be immediately read out, slowly and distinctly, that she might catch every word.

"It has been intended for Anne," said Pleasance, with something of the jarred-on, shocked feeling with which, as occasionally happens, we find the dead addressed as the living, in communications which can no more reach or concern them.

"You dunno say it, Pleasance," exclaimed Mrs. Balls, scandalized, "and who do the writer be, or what can he 'a to say to your sister, as were little bessn a child when she were took, poor gal?"

"It is something about the money that papa left," said Pleasance simply, taking up the letter, and proceeding to study its contents. "It is from the lawyer who has had charge of it, I suppose. He writes:—

'TO MISS ANNE HATTON, THE MANOR FARM, SAXFORD.

'MADAM,—Our firm was instructed on the 27th of April, 1855, by our client, Lionel Wyndham, Esquire, of Sufton Hall, Northamptonshire, to assume the management of a sum of money for the benefit of you and your sister, being the children of the late Frederick Hatton, Esquire. The sum in question was £430 (four hundred and thirty pounds), being what remained to the account of your late father at his banker's, Drummond & Co. The money was under the control of the said Lionel Wyndham, as the husband of the late Mr. Hatton's sole surviving sister, and your lawful guardian, but was transferred to our care to save our client the necessity of active steps, which under the circumstances he did not desire to take in the matter. According to his directions, the money was to remain in the bank until application was made for the whole or part of the fund, on your account or on that of your sister, by such of your relations on the mother's side as had constituted themselves your guardians, and as we, acting for your lawful guardian, should consider eligible to be your representatives. We find that no such claim has been made, and that the money has been left, doubtless pending your and your sister's coming of age, and taking possession of your shares. As by comparing dates, and the certificates with which we were furnished, on the transfer of Mr. Wyndham's power to us, that time is close at hand, we await your orders as to the disposal of the money, which, allowing for interest, and deducting the usual expenses, now amounts to the sum of four hundred and sixty-seven pounds, eighteen shillings, and threepence, of which your share is two hundred and thirty-three pounds,

nineteen shillings, and one penny half-penny.

"I remain your obedient servant,
JOHN HARDWICKE,
for FAIRLIE & CO."

Mrs. Balls, after listening with open ears, had been thunderstruck by the contents of the letter. The first symptoms which she gave of recovery was to throw up her silk-gloved hands in the air, dropping from the left hand an alpaca umbrella, which fell with a crash on the floor, and made the cat on the hearth start up and fly for its life, and Pleasance's canary-bird stop in pecking its seed, and, with its head on one side, inquire with its beads of black eyes what could be the matter.

"Lor' a' mussy, Pleasance, you 'a come into a fortin. I knew allers summat 'ould be yourn when you were one-and-twenty, for Lawyer Lockwood—he said as much, when you comed fust. But did I ever think it were hunders and hunders on pounds? You are a heiress, my gal, as need never soil your fingers more, 'cept for choice, not so long as you live. As for Long Dick, poor chap, I doubt he's a long way behind you now, unless you think differently. It is liker it were Squire Lockwood's son, as is a scapegrace, the more's the pity, unless he be to pick up. You and me will live together, Pleasance, and have a likely gal to wait on us, and flummery as well as turnovers to eat every day. We can go where you like, to Cheam or to Lunnon, though I never were town-bred, and I doubt I 'ould miss the beast-eses, as I have been used to all my life, and what will become of Lawyer Lockwood's cheeses, yet a while, afore he 'a got a proper pesson into my shoes, I cannot tell. But it is for you to name the place and seek your pleasure, Pleasance, since you 'a come into your fortune."

"But I have not come into it yet, Mrs. Balls," said Pleasance, shaking her head. "This letter was for Anne, and she was two years older than I."

Mrs. Balls could not bear to think of any delay in the golden shower which had so suddenly fallen on Pleasance, and through Pleasance on herself. "But, mor, if you write and tell en, they'll never be so hard as to keep you any longer out of your fortin," pled Mrs. Balls, quite piteously, on the back of her exultation. "Why, Pleasance, though I should not say it to hurt a gal as is hale and hearty, thank God, still life is but grass and worms, as passon says, and at this rate you might not live to get your fortin, or

any pleasure out on it. See how your poor sister, as was a deal younger than you are now, was took at a stroke."

"And is not Anne infinitely better off than I am now?" said Pleasance softly and steadfastly; "we are Christians, and believe that."

"Oh, yes, we are Chrissens," said Mrs. Balls, still chafing, "and make the best on our losses; but I do not see, for my part, what being Chrissens 'a to do in forbidding us from entering on our fortens. I think it do be kinder thankless and grudging to speak so, Pleasance."

"And though we had this poor little remnant of my father's portion in our hands, at this moment, we could not, even if we wished it, live like idle ladies upon it. I know so much as that, from the spending of my earnings, and from what I have heard Long Dick calculate about his savings, and what I have read; it would not serve us over three or four years. I remember Mrs. Wyndham took care to point that out to our inexperience—to Anne's and mine, when we were poor young girls," ended Pleasance, looking back with wistful commiseration on her former self.

But Mrs. Balls could not see anything except that Pleasance was "contrairy."

"I am sure I should not know how to be an idle lady now; I should prove but a sorry specimen after having been busy and useful all these years," Pleasance tried to coax her old friend. "I could not keep my hands still, I should be forever putting out the cloven foot; and you, Mrs. Balls, would weary your heart out."

"Then what may you be goin' to do, may I ax?" said Mrs. Balls severely; "let the money, as your poor father meant to be yourn, lie still in that bank, to serve your enemies, and as if that bank were an old stocken, till it d' be robbed or broke, or what not, while you be growed so fine you'll not stir your foot to touch hunders because they beant thousands. Oh! Pleasance, the pride of the human heart, passon ain't far wrong there."

"I never said I would not touch 'it, dear," said Pleasance, looking up brightly. "I'll write that, alas! there is nobody but me, and I'll bide my time; and then, Mrs. Balls, though we do not care to be turned back into idle ladies—to waste the one day, and want the next—though we are wise enough to keep our place, and go on working, because we have got used to work, and because we know work is far the best, doing our duty in the station to which we have been called—yes, I was

called to it too, and more solemnly than you — we'll not be above taking the good of our fortune; we'll buy a 'tidy few things,' and cut a few capers from our store. Don't you see it will be far better than having to live upon the money when it would not go far or last long? It will be something to get pleasure from, as well as to fall back upon, for those rainy days that working-people are always hearing about, as if working-people, with simple needs, should not be better armed than any other people against rainy days. Why, Mrs. Balls, I am not indifferent, I am quite uplifted with the prospect of coming into my fortune."

Mrs. Balls was not reconciled that night to such moderation, if it were not sheer apathy or close-fistedness that was creeping over Pleasance. Mrs. Balls was very unhappy and cross in thinking, did her young cousin mean to keep her fortune to herself, and was she but eluding her in seeking to depreciate and make light of the great news? A poor return for all that Mrs. Balls had done for the girl and her sister — a miserable specimen of the selfishness and heartlessness in which even gentle birth on one side may result. Mrs. Balls had not cherished such ungenerous and unjust thoughts often, or been more out of sorts — not when pleuro-pneumonia had been apprehended among Lawyer Lockwood's cows. So much for the effect of even the announcement of a little fortune coming to one member of a united family party.

But a night's rest cleared away the cobwebs of misunderstanding. Mrs. Balls rose satisfied of Pleasance's integrity and kindness, as she was of her own. She began to comprehend that she was too old for a change of life, and that it was well for her that Pleasance was contented not to rise again in the world. This did not hinder, it probably enhanced in the end, as with the added consciousness of sober self-respect and prudent humility and general well-doing, Mrs. Balls's satisfaction and delight in dwelling on Pleasance's coming hundreds, which were to remain in the bank, and in communicating the fact of their existence and boasting of it, with an elaborate attempt at modesty, which by no means extinguished the boasting, to Mrs. Blennerhasset and Mrs. Morse, until the information spread like wildfire over Saxford.

As for Pleasance, her feelings were in the first place exactly what she had described them, after the first startling sensation imparted by the tidings; she was

girlishly, almost childishly, pleased with hearing of having a little, not too much, money of her own, of which until this reminder she had no distinct conception, and indeed had nearly forgotten, since she had judged, when she remembered it at all, that it might have taken wings and vanished out of her sight like other and more precious things.

If the money had been some large sum, Pleasance felt that she would have been in a strait, encumbered and distressed, for what could a girl who had cast in her lot with working-people, and who was herself grown up a working-woman, do with a fortune? It would have become a snare and a stumbling-block to her and her neighbours; it would have rendered her the prey of designing persons; it would have been a glaring incongruity, robbing her life of all simplicity and harmony. She should not have known what to do with the golden burden, and if she had been compelled, in pure self-defence, and as a duty of property, to draw apart from the class in which she had found shelter, and to mount again in the ranks, how abashed she should have been, with her real sentiments! What a traitress she should have considered herself to all her own convictions and resolutions! How she must have ended by being painfully convinced that she was from home, and hampered and degraded!

But, as it was, these hundreds of pounds were no distracting obligation either in prospect or in actual possession. In place of threatening to make Pleasance a poor rich woman, they promised to make her what was quite different, a rich poor woman. They would supplement her sufficient stock, and furnish her with opportunities for gratifying many an innocent inclination, and doing many a deed that she strongly desired to do.

When Pleasance was a schoolgirl at the Hayes, she had heard some girl or governess sing an old-fashioned song, in which the singer coveted the possession of a four-leaved shamrock, and vowed, if she held the ancient charms, she would exercise it in acts of universal beneficence. Pleasance felt as if she were the possessor of this shamrock, or, what was perhaps a happiness with a more delicate bloom, as if she were the anticipator, by sure and certain anticipation, of the possession of the shamrock.

For days after the receipt of the lawyer's letter, Pleasance went about house-keeping for Mrs. Balls, hanging up dried herbs, taking up carrots and onions, find-

ing stray chickens, chattering to Mrs. Balls, and even to Long Dick, when she came across him, more freely than was her wont, and all the time her mind was full of happy projects. She would buy a screen to keep off the draught from the door, and a soft big chair for Mrs. Balls, easier than the great oaken receptacles in which she and Anne had sat on the April evening when they had come to take refuge at the manor. She would buy such a crutch for Lizzie Blennerhasset as should greatly lighten her lameness. She would buy a new fiddle, or if the old were better, new and suitable music, and pay for courses of lessons for Clem Blennerhasset. She would—well, what could she do that would not compromise her with Long Dick? She would buy a spick and span new silver-mounted whip, which should be Dick's own, not Lawyer Lockwood's, and which she could trust Dick not to use unmercifully on her friends Dobbin or Diamond or Prince or Punch. She would be able to pay for the doctor and physic, and to provide a constant supply of wine and little dainties for poor Molly Griffith, who was dying of consumption in the village. She would buy a fresh fine cage fitted up with every convenience for her bird, and a fresh fine collar, only he would not appreciate it—better give him an additional bone—for Jowler.

The first diminution to Pleasance's happiness was caused by perceiving that the story of her coming fortune had roused the old, and as she thought the dead, suspicion and antagonism against her among the village girls, while their elders spoke to her with a cautious reserve and a crafty deference in midst of their independence which Pleasance liked quite as ill as the suspicion and antagonism. With the girls the offence of the coming hundreds was still more serious than the offence of wearing spectacles, and in reference to it the old jeering title "Madam" or "My Lady" was revived and bandied about worse than before, and with it the disparaging distinction which, in the minds of the spiteful speakers, had become so inappropriate—ay, there was the rub—that it was a special taunt to use it now, of "gentle beggar."

Lizzie Blennerhasset formed an exception to this rout, but even Lizzie offended and affronted Pleasance by supposing that she would have her "gowns" made in Cheam in another year or so, and not by a common dressmaker with a common cut, like Lizzie.

Pleasance twinkled away moisture that

would gather in her eyes, in the midst of her cheery anticipations, at the world's injustice, while she was bent on living it down.

Then there came a new trouble. Long Dick who had taken utter despair to himself, and fairly shunned Pleasance with a sullen, bitter air which he had not shown before, from the day that he heard that she was to have such an inheritance, broke out worse than ever, while Lizzie Blennerhasset was miserable, and Pleasance remorseful.

What help for it? and small blame to him, said the gossips, when the girl he had been going after for years, and had set his whole heart upon, would never have him, since she had word of a fortune, and fine friends to follow, very likely. They daresayed not. She had not been his bargain before, as the poor fellow had seen, and had given herself airs—though she had pretended not—which she might have spared; and it needed no Solomon to see that it was all up with Long Dick. Pleasance Hatton would look, as she had always been looking, on the sly, for all her affectation of friendliness, a great deal higher; she might get a small shop-keeper or a ship-captain in Cheam, with her hundreds to fill his shop or buy his ship.

These cool conclusions which were falling like a bolt of ice on Long Dick's heart, and burning into it, for ice as well as fire burns, came to Pleasance's ears.

"Who says that I have given them any right to foretell what will become of me? Nobody has such a right," cried Pleasance indignantly. "How dare anybody invent such wicked lies as that money will ever come between me and my friends, or change me to them in the smallest jot or tittle?"

The village gossips all but drove her into Long Dick's arms; she was stung into seeking him in the freedom of their intercourse, even as he fled from her, and into being so kind to him that her fate had nearly passed out of her hands then and there. The ardour of Long Dick's gratitude saved her, for Pleasance quailed and drew back anew before that ardour.

From The Contemporary Review.
RUSSIAN IDYLLS.

WHETHER the songs of the Russian people be "most musical" or not, there can be no doubt that a great many of them are "most melancholy." For the

sorrow and sighing which they express, for the gloom which they suggest, various causes have been alleged. Sometimes it is asserted that the climate exercises so depressing an influence as to transpose all song into a minor key; sometimes the supposed lowness of Russian spirits is accounted for by the absence of anything like high hills. But as similar influences do not appear to produce like results elsewhere, and as in reality the Russian peasant is as cheerful as a man can well be expected to be who lives to a great extent on cabbage soup and salted cucumbers, it is probable that the sadness of popular song must not be altogether attributed to the summer heats and the wintry frosts, or to the obstinacy with which the face of nature, in many parts of Russia, persists in being plain. With more plausibility have attempts been made to account for it historically as the bitter fruit of long-continued oppression and wrong — a survival in these better days of the terrible times in which the land was constantly being laid waste by civil war or by Tartar or Polish foray, when men's hearts fainted within them because of their trouble, and the blithe voice of song was hushed. Serfdom, also, cannot well have been without its share in lowering the tone of the nation's spirits. But it is probable that in order to arrive at a correct solution of the problem, a variety of circumstances must be taken into account. Each of the causes already referred to may have contributed its share to the general burden under which the poets of the people appear to have groaned. Some allowance also must be made for the softness of the Slavonic nature — one of the leading characteristics of a family of nations which has had to mourn the subjugation of so many of its members.

The sadness of a great number of popular poems may be accounted for by the fact that they belong to one or other of the two great divisions of "ritual songs," those referring to marriage or death. That dirges should be doleful all must understand, but the melancholy nature of so many Russian wedding-songs must appear strange to any listener who is unaware that the idea still survives in peasant poetry that a bride is purchased if not captured, and that she is expected to bewail her unwelcome transfer from "the dear parental home" to "a distant, unknown land." These songs have exercised a considerable influence upon many of the Russian poets not of the peasant-class, some of whom, moreover, were dis-

posed by the constitutional feebleness which, in their cases, led to premature decay, to sympathize with the sadder utterances of the popular voice, to brood over the darker side of the peasant's lot.

Both Koltsof and Nikitin were singers whose path lay amid frequent thorns, and sloped rapidly towards the grave. It was natural that, in describing the life of the common people, they should have echoed the sighing more often than the laughter which came to their ears from village homes. But there are other writers whose pictures of rural life are tinged by a gloom which has been deliberately darkened. In the olden days, when the peasant was at the mercy of his lord, and when the eyes of justice were firmly closed to all offences committed by a man of property, there was more than sufficient to justify the savage indignation of a satirist. The literature at the time of Nicholas expressed many a political or social protest under the pretence of its being a purely artistic utterance, and many a word-painter deepened the shadows on his canvas with an eye to other than the legitimate effects of *chiaroscuro*. The principal living representative of the indignant school is Nekrasof, a poet of genuine originality, vigorous, terse, and possessed of a wonderful command over language, one that enables him to conceal consummate art under an appearance of unstudied simplicity. Of his pictures of Russian life, representing for the most part village scenes, we now propose to offer a few specimens.

The following short poem tells its own tale with sufficient clearness. Nekrasof in his earlier writings, of which this is one, scarcely ever moralized. He usually treated his subject in the most realistic manner, seldom softening anything, still more rarely idealizing. The future, as is the case with the village scenes in Tourguéneff's admirable "Notes of a Sportsman," was painted to all appearance conscientiously from life, and then left to convey its moral as it best could.

THE FORGOTTEN VILLAGE.

Old Nenila asked Vlas, the bailiff, for some wood to mend her cottage with. "You sha'n't have it," was his answer. "Don't you go expecting any!" "Well, the master will come," thought the old woman to herself; "the master will settle about it. He'll see how wretched my hut is. He'll order the wood to be given me."

A greedy fellow in the neighbourhood cut off a great slice of the peasants' ground

in the most unfair manner. "Well, the master will come," thought the peasants. "The land-measurers will catch it! The master will just say a word, and our land will be our own again."

A young labourer wanted to marry Natāsha; but the head-steward, a susceptible German, wouldn't let the girl do as she wished. "Let's wait, Ignāsha," says she; "the master will come." Whenever there's a dispute about anything, young and old repeat in chorus, "Well, the master will come."

Nenila has died. On the land taken from the peasants the thievish neighbour's harvest ripens hundredfold. The youngsters of old days have become bearded men. The labourer Ignāsha has been sent away to the army. As for Natāsha, she no longer dreams of getting married.

But the master has not come. The master has not so much as begun his journey.

At last one day there appears in the middle of the road a funeral car, drawn by three pair of horses. On the lofty car is set an oaken coffin. Within the coffin lies the master; behind it is his heir. They sing a requiem for the old master. The new one wipes away his tears, gets into his carriage, and sets off for St. Petersburg.

In some of his later poems about rustic hardships, Nekrasof has assumed a more didactic tone, but his peasant portraits are as realistic as of old—their outlines hard and clear, their colouring cold and crude. Thus, in his "Meditations at the State Entrance," he draws a picture of the crowds of poor suppliants who on ordinary days beset the palace doors, to which, on great occasions, society hurries, "with a sort of solemn awe," to inscribe its names and titles:—

"One day" he goes on to say:—

I saw some moujiks coming, common Russian country folk. They said a prayer before the church, and then stood with bent brown heads at a respectful distance.

The porter appeared. "Let us in!" they cried in a tone of half hope, half anguish. He looked at them hard. They were not comely to look at. Sunburnt their hands and faces, worn their old raiment, each one with a wallet on his bowed back, a cross on his breast, and blood on feet cased in home-made bast shoes. One could see that they had travelled a long way, from one of the far-off provinces. A voice called out to the porter, "Away with them. Ragged rubbish

is not welcomed by Ours." And the door shut with a bang. The pilgrims stood still for a while, then they undid their scanty purses. But the porter would not let them in—would not accept their paltry coppers. "God be his judge!" they said, and so saying, with arms hanging hopelessly, and with heads, while they remained in sight, still uncovered, they went on their way beneath the burning sun.

At this point the poet breaks into a vigorous address to the august tenant of the palace, urging the claims for relief of the peasant, to whose sorrows the final lines are devoted.

Native land! Tell me of that district, such as mine eyes have never seen, where thy guardian and tiller, where the Russian moujik, does not groan. He groans in the fields, along the roads.

He groans in police-cells, in prisons, in mines, in the convict-chain. Where the corn dries he groans, where the hay is piled, and where in his cart he spends the night on the open plain. In his own poor hut he groans, unblest by the light of God's sun. In every out-of-the-way town his groans are heard at the doorways of law court and government office.

Go to the Volga. What wail is that which resounds along the mighty Russian river? That wail is what we call a song. There a team of towing-men is at work. O Volga! Volga! In the spring-tide abounding with waters, thou dost not pour over the fields so wide a wave as that flood of the people's sorrow in which our land is steeped.

Where the people is, there is lamentation. Ah, dear ones! what means your incessant complaint? Will ye awake full of strength? Or have ye, bowing before the decree of fate, already done all that lay in your power—composed a song like unto a groan, and given over your souls to eternal sleep?

This poem was written in 1858. In 1864 appeared another protest in favour of the working-man so strong in its expressions that it is said to have caused the suspension of the magazine in which it was published. It is called "The Railway." As they sit in a first-class railway carriage a "general" and his young son hold the following conversation:—

VANYA. Papa, who made this railway?
The FATHER. General Klenmichel, my dear.*

Overhearing this the poet falls into a reverie. Then in fancy he addresses the boy, offers now, while the winter moon shines brightly, to show him the truth. Too great for one pair of shoulders, he

* "Engineers, my dear," is the modified form of the reply in the collected works.

says, was the burden of making this railway. But there is a tsar in the world — a pitiless tsar — and his name is Hunger. Hither did he drive many to die. The land beside the rail is rich in Russian bones.

List! Terrible sounds arise! Stamping and the gnashing of teeth. Shadows fly over the frost-covered panes. What goes there? The crowd of the dead!

Some run ahead along the rails; some keep pace by our side. Dost thou hear their song? "On this moonshiny night we love to look on our work!"

"We withered away in heat and cold, our backs forever bent. In earth huts we lived, with hunger we strove, scurried, frost-bitten, drenched to the bone. Cheated by gangers, by officers flogged, crushed down by the hard pressure of need — yet we bore it all — we the soldiers of God, the peaceful children of toil!"

"Brothers! ye gather the fruits of our work. Our lot was to rot in the ground. Do ye think of us kindly? Or have ye long since forgotten our sorrowful fate?"

The poet tells the boy not to be alarmed at this wild song. The forms he sees are those of his brothers — moujiks from the Volga, from the Oka, from all parts of the vast empire. Much have they toiled and suffered. There, for instance, stands "a tall, haggard White-Russian, worn out with ague. His lips are bloodless, sunken his temples; there are sores on his thin hands; his legs are swollen with long standing up to the knees in water. Hollow is his breast from incessant stooping, day after day, over the spade. Look at him well, Vanya. Painfully did that man earn his bread." Just then the whistling sounds, the dead vanish. Vanya tells his father what he has seen and heard. The general laughs, but requests the poet now to describe the bright side of the labourer's life. He complies, and depicts the festive scene which closes the railway-making drama. All is going well. The dead are buried, the sick are in huts out of sight. The contractor gazes with content upon the finished works. Turning to the labourers, he gives them a cask of spirits and he wipes off the scores he has against them. Amid loud hurrahs they unyoke the horses from the contractor's carriage, and drag it along the road in triumph.

Nekrasof's earlier poems, in which there is nothing openly said about the dignity of labour and the brotherhood of man, are perhaps to be preferred to the less reticent productions of later years. To the former

class belong a number of village studies. One of them, entitled "In the Village," begins with a description of a wet and dreary day. Evening draws on; a swarm of crows comes flying home to roost, looking like a great black net hung between earth and sky. Two old women meet at the village well. "You seem to be always weeping," says the one. "Some sad thought goes through your heart like a master through his house." "How can I help weeping?" replies the other. "My heart aches and is bowed down by sorrow. He is dead, Kassianovna dead, my dear one, dead and buried in the earth." It is her son she mourns — her tall, strong-handed, firm-chested son. Forty bears had he slain; the forty-first killed him. The bear was killed too, and its skin was sold for seventeen roubles, which were given to the repose of his soul.

The old cottage shakes with the wind, the barn has tumbled down. I wander along the road as if dazed, feeling as if I might come upon my son. He would take his axe. Things would get set right. He would comfort his old mother. But he's dead, Kassianovna, dead, my dear one. If you like I'll sell you his axe.

Who will caress the desolate old woman? In the sorest need am I. In the stormy autumn, the frosty winter, who will provide me with fuel? Who will bring me fresh hare-skins when my warm fur cloak is worn out? He is dead, Kassianovna, dead, my dear one. Uselessly rusts his gun.

Trust me, my sister; from cares and sorrows, the world has grown so wretched to me! As I lie in my hut, I cover myself with the nets just as if with a shroud. But no! Death will not come. I wander alone, with a barren pity looked on by all. He is dead, Kassianovna, dead, my dear one. Ah! if it were not a sin —

But these rural pictures are not always so dreary. Take, for instance, the poem called

VILLAGE NEWS.

There is the wood, and there the last low hill. Noisy but light, a summer shower begins To patter; thousands of small nails, steel-bright,

Bound up, heads downwards, all along the road.

The tiresome dust is laid. Once more, thank God,

I've made this pleasant journey. See, the barns,

The corn-kiln. Ah! how sweet the warm grain's breath!

Hey! stop the carriage! See, from every house

Out run the inmates, all familiar faces.

There's not a moujik there but is a friend.

"Hail, brothers!"

"Here's your godson, Vanyushka."

"I see him, gossip. Stay, I've got a toy
For the youngster."

"Tell us how you've been.

You've kept your word. We've not expected
you

For nothing. We've preserved the game so
well

There's not been one bird killed, and now the
broods

Are strong on the wing. When you go out
to shoot

'Twill be 'bang, bang,' if but your legs hold
out.

But only see, how pale you are and thin!
We didn't send you off like that. You look

As if they'd flogged you through the ranks
three times

Last winter. Really though, dear friend, you
seem

But half alive. Have things gone ill with
you?"

"I've got a stubborn heart that stupidly
Bothers itself for nothing. But down here
I shall get set to rights. What news have you
To give?"

"Vlas died two days ago, and left
His saints-book to you."

"Heaven be his! How old
Was he? A hundred?"

"Yes, with a tail thereto.
The Lord works wonders."

"How about the crops?"

"Only so-so. There's more bad news; they've
stolen

A deal of wood of yours. The stanovoi
Was sent for, but 'My district's big,' says he.

'What can I do? I can't flog every one.'
So saying, off he bolted. In Botof

They've lost much cattle, and the accursed
swine

Have eaten up a baby. In Shakof

A man got pitchforked lately. His son's wife
It was who did it — not without good cause.

A shepherd lad was killed among his sheep
By lightning. Ah! that really was a storm!

How we escaped, God knows! The bells,
the bells!

Ring as if for Easter! All our brooks
Were flooded six feet deep. The cattle ran

Home from the fields like mad, the angry wind
Blowing them off their feet. — We all were
grieved

About the boy. A tiny mite; but once
He saved a ram from a wolf. He called him

Wolf-cub!

Dear heart! By cock-crow he'd be up, sing
songs,

Run to and fro, make himself gay with flowers.
His mother saw him off that day. 'Take

care,
My child,' says she. 'Just listen how the wind

Is howling.' 'What's a storm to me? I'm
not

A child,' says he, and leaped and cracked his
whip.

We laughed, yawned through the useless
morning. Then

The bad news came. We had to go
And fetch the body. He'd been safe enough.

But Vanka cried, 'What are you doing there
Under a tree? That's dangerous. Be off!'

He never said a word, but went away,
And lay beside the hillock underneath

His mat. That very spot the Lord
Struck with His bolt. We fetched the body

home,
And when the mat was lifted up a cry

Arose from all our women. Quietly
Did the Wolf-cub lie asleep. His shirt blood-

stained;
His pipe still in his little hand; a wreath

Of cornflowers and of clover on his head."

In the same genial tone is written the
piece called "Peasant Children." Very

pleasant are its pictures of Russian child-
life. Early on a fine summer's morning

we see the youngsters scampering off to
the woods to look for mushrooms, parting

the leaves, circling the stumps, starting at
times at the sight of a snake. Coming

back, they find the village full of pilgrims
on their way to the monasteries. Under

the thick old village elms sit the tired
travellers. The children gather round

and listen to stories "about Kief, about
the Turk, about wondrous beasts." Pres-

ently away run the children from the burn-
ing heat to bathe in the river, which winds

among the meadows like a blue ribbon.
The little flaxen-haired heads float down

the stream "like pale mushrooms in a for-
est glade." The banks resound with the

shouting and the laughter accompanying
their play and mimic fights. Racing home

to dinner they catch sight of a wolf.
"Such a monster!" A hare gallops by

them with eyes askint; they find a hedge-
hog and offer it flies and milk. When the

fruits are ripe in the woods away they go
to gather strawberries, raspberries, cur-

nants, and blackberries, returning with
faces stained with juice, and proud of

having caught an old woodcock with a
broken wing. When playtime is over,

Vanya begins to work. He sees his fa-
ther plough and sow. He watches the

corn as it grows and ripens. He sees the
grain threshed out and ground, and the

flour baked. He eats of the new bread
and rejoices; he goes out to help in the

fields, and rides back to the village as hap-
py as a king. One day, the poet tells us,

during a hard frost, he met a child who
was bringing home a sledge-load of wood

from the forest — a tiny boy in big boots,
big gloves, and ample sheepskin, who led

his horse with an air of official dignity.
Far off in the forest was heard the ring-

ing axe of the woodcutter, his father. "Has your father a large family?" cried the poet. "Very large," was the reply of the child, who proceeded to say, "And there are only two men in it — my father and I." "And how old are you?" "Just six." "Now then, stupid!" added the urchin, addressing his horse in a gruff voice, and with a tug at the bridle strode rapidly away. "The sun shone so brightly on this picture," continues the poet, "the boy was so absurdly small, that it all looked as if it were cut out of pasteboard, as if I had lighted upon a toy-theatre. But the boy was a real live boy, and the horse, and the sledge, and the load of brushwood, and the drifted snow, and the cold light of the wintry sun — all, all was thoroughly Russian."

By way of a contrast to these idyllic scenes we may take the following realistic illustrations of Russian drunkenness. They occur in a poem called "Brandy."

I.

Without cause has the barin flogged me. What has come over me I know not. When I think of it I shudder all over. Darker and darker grows my soul within me. How can I look people in the face now? How can I show myself to her I love? Long lay I silently above the stove, held my peace, and touched no food. During the night came the Evil One, whispered in my ear wild, mad sayings. When I rose in the morning my heart was heavy within me. I tried to pray, but I could not. Not a word did I say to any one. Without crossing myself I left the house. Suddenly cried my sister after me, "Won't you have some brandy, brother?" I drank every drop there was in the bottle — stayed at home all the rest of the day.

II.

A neighbour's daughter, the young Stefanèda, won my heart. I asked her of her father, and neither he nor the girl objected. But it seems that another youngster gained our starosta's good graces. And it ended in her being led past my window by the unloved one, with the bridal crown on her head. A man's heart isn't made of stone! Like a madman I leapt out of window into the street. "Wait a bit!" I cried; "I'll settle with you." So I went to the kabak to get a glass of brandy, by way of keeping up my courage. In came my brother Petrushka, and offered to treat me. I stayed out the drinking of one measure, and after that another followed in its turn. My heart grew lighter somehow, and for that day I forgot all about the knife. The next morning I thought better about it.

III.

I agreed with a merchant to find the workmen and repair all the stoves in his house. The job was done in a month, and I went to get my account settled. He was going to cheat me out of part of the money, the thieving soul! I complained, and threatened him with the law. "Very well," said he, "then you sha'n't have a single kopeck." And he had me turned out of the house by the scruff of the neck. For eight weeks running I used to go to his house, but I could never find him at home. I had no means of paying the workmen, and they told me I should be taken to prison. So I sharpened a broad axe. "Perish then!" said I to myself. Off I set, hid myself like a thief beside the well-known house, and waited. But the cold half froze me. There was a kabak just across the way: thought I to myself, "Why shouldn't I go in?" In I went, spent my last shilling in drink, got into a squabble — and woke up at the police-station.

Russian ideas, it may be observed, often differ considerably from those to which we are accustomed as regards not only drink but many other things as well. Here, for instance, is a strange revelation of rustic humanity. An old soldier has been boasting of what he did during the French invasion and retreat. To him enters a peasant, and says: —

Well, soldier, you fought in that war yourself, did you? So you can speak with authority. Good. But let me too say a word. We played a trick or two ourselves.

When the Frenchman shoved himself into our company, and saw there was little to make by it, he fell into confusion, you remember, and immediately scampered back again. Well, we got hold of a family — father, mother, and three whelps. We smashed the moosoo at once, not with muskets, but with our fists. The wife cried, sobbed, tore her hair. We looked on, and were sorry for her. Pity took hold of us. An axe struck his blow, and there she lay alongside of her husband. Well, then, the children. They jumped about, wrung their hands, said something you couldn't make out a word of, and cried, poor things, at the top of their voices. Dear, dear! Tears pierced us. What was to be done? We talked it over for some time; then we killed the poor things as quickly as possible, and buried the whole lot of them together.

That's how it was, soldier. Trust me, we didn't sit with our hands folded. And though we didn't fight in the war, yet we played a trick or two ourselves.

From this uncomfortable story — which may remind the reader of Sir Robert Wilson's account of how the grand duke Constantine Pavlovich killed a French

prisoner out of sheer pity, and could not understand how any one could fail to appreciate his humanity, as well as of Mr. Tourguèneff's delightful description of the French drummer whom his moujik capturers were about to drown, when he was ransomed from them by a country gentleman who, though not musical himself, wanted his daughter to be taught the piano—we will turn to a subject which more readily lends itself to poetic treatment, that of the peasant's final severance from the plot of land he loves so well. It forms the theme of a poem called

THE UNREAPED PLOT.

It is late in the autumn. The rooks have fled. The forest is leafless, the fields are bare.

Only one plot remains unreaped. Sad are the thoughts it suggests to me.

Methinks I hear the ears whispering, "We are weary of hearing the autumn wind; Weary of bowing down to the ground, bathing in dust our juicy grain.

Every night, in greedy flocks, gather passing birds to plunder our stores.

The hare treads us down, we are crushed by the storm. Where is our sower? Why tarries he?

Is it because we are worse than the rest? Have we not blossomed and borne fruit aright?

No; we are not worse than the rest. Long ago swelled and ripened our grain.

Not that the autumn winds should scatter us; not for that surely he ploughed and sowed."

The wind brings them back a sad reply: "Your sower is fit for nothing now.

Well did he know why he ploughed and sowed; why he toiled at a task beyond his strength.

Poor fellow! he neither eats nor drinks. A worm is sucking his ailing heart.

The arms that of old these furrows traced are now shrunk to chips, hang down like thongs.

His eyes are dim. Weak now is the voice which used to chant a doleful song,

As bending forward with outstretched arms, he thoughtfully followed the plough through the field."

Disease and death are favourite subjects with Nekrasof. In one striking poem he sketches the inmates of a city hospital; in another he lets us listen to the sorrows of "Orina, the soldier's mother," whose son has come back from his regiment to die in her poverty-stricken hut. But by far the most remarkable of his funeral poems is that named "Frost,"* a piece of some length, containing nearly a thou-

sand lines. In it is first described the interior of a peasant's cottage, the master of which has just died. The corpse lies on a bench by the window. The widow, sobbing quietly, is making the shroud. She is firm of will, and she refuses to give herself up to grief. Only the tears fall fast on her busy hands, "as grain drops silently from ripened ears of corn." Meanwhile, a couple of miles away, the dead man's father is choosing a spot for the grave. Long does he pause, looking round the dreary grave-yard wrapt in a winding-sheet of snow, through which emerge grey wooden crosses bent by many storms. Up to his knees in snow does he stand, resting shovel and pick on the ground, his hair all white with hoarfrost. At last he selects a place round which the sunlight will play, on which the cross will be within sight of the road; then bends his aged back, shovels away the snow, and pierces the frozen soil. At last the task is done, and he scrambles out of the grave. "It was not I who ought to have dug that hole," he mutters. "It was not Proclus who ought to have slept in it. It was not Proclus—" Just then he stumbles, and the pick falls into the grave. Recovering it with some difficulty he sets out homewards, meeting on the way his wife, who has been to the village to buy the coffin. On their return, the children having been sent to a neighbour's cottage, begins the work of preparing the corpse for burial.

Slowly, reverently, austere, is the sad duty done. Not a word is uttered without need, not an outward tear is shed.

He sleeps, having laboured so long in the sweat of his brow! He sleeps, who so long tilled the soil! On the white deal table he lies, heedless of surrounding sorrow:

Clad in a long woollen shirt he lies, shod with new linden-bark shoes. Beside his head gleam lighted candles.

At rest are the large, callous hands, which have endured so much labour. Calm and unweary is his comely face.

So long as this part of the ceremony lasts a mournful silence is observed. But when it is over, "there is no longer need to struggle with sorrow; forth from the lips in a stream of words burst the thoughts which have long been seething in the mind." Turning to her dead husband, Darya addresses him in wailing song:—

O dearest blue-winged dove of ours! Say whither from us hast thou fled? Unequaled wert thou in the village, for beauty, for stature, for strength!

* *Moròs, Krasny Nos, Frost, the Red-Nosed.*

To thy parents a counsellor prudent ! In the field strong-handed for toil ! To thy guests open-handed and courteous ! To thy children and wife full of love !

Why so soon is thy life-journey ended ? Why desert us, O dear one, so soon ? Not in spring-water have we to bathe thee. So fast flow hot tears from our eyes.

Thy mother will soon die of sorrow ; thy father no more cares for life. Like a birch-stem left bare in the forest, stands thy wife in her desolate home.

For her misery hast thou no pity ? No care for thy children ? Arise ! from the field that thou lovest so dearly the harvest in summer-time reap !

Let thy arms, love, no longer be folded ; thy falcon-like eyes shut no more. Toss thy silken curls back from thy forehead ; thy sweet lips no longer keep closed.

Hearing the sound of the "wailing," the neighbours flock in, place burning tapers by the sacred picture, prostrate themselves before it, and silently return home. When the last visitor has left, the mourners sit down to their frugal meal. Then the old father, by the feeble light of the fire-splinter, sets to work at a pair of bast shoes ; the old mother lies down, sighing deeply, above the stove, and Darya, the young widow, goes to see after the children. "All night long the reader, with a light beside him, reads psalms above the dead, and from behind the stove the cricket responds with its shrill chirping."

Next day, while a keen wind drives fast before it the snowflakes which dull the sun's light, the dead man is carried to his last home. His little children sit on the sledge beside the coffin, the widow leads the horse. In front walk the old father and mother. Behind follow a few of the neighbours, talking among themselves of the bleak days in store for Darya and her fatherless little ones. Proclus is laid in the grave with all due solemnity, all uttering words of praise over his coffin. Even the starosta commends him, saying that he was always punctual in paying his dues to his master and his taxes to the crown. Then the friends cross themselves once more above the grave and set off homewards. "Tall, gaunt, grey, the bare-headed father, not moving, not speaking, stands like a monument above his son's grave. At length the greybeard bends down gently over it, and smooths its surface with his spade, his wife wailing aloud the while." Meanwhile Darya has returned home with the children, and found the fire out and the wood-bin empty. So she takes the little ones back to the

friendly neighbour, and goes with the sledge to the forest to cut wood.

In the forest all is cold and still. Darya cuts a load of brush-wood, and piles it on the sledge. Then, her work being done, she gives way to sorrow. Her tears fall unheeded, the lifeless winter sun, "like the round yellow eye of an owl," seems to stare at her with cold indifference. Brooding over her loss, she falls into a half dream, thinking how it will be her lot alone to reap the next year's harvest. At times she thinks her husband still lives, and is near her ; and she talks to him about the children, looking into the future, and seeing in fancy how well their girl shows in the village dance, with her bright blue eyes and long brown hair, and with what festivity is celebrated the marriage of their son, sturdy of frame, comely in face, with a complexion "of blood and milk." Presently she remembers what has happened, thinks of how she walked one night, during her husband's illness, to a distant convent ; how she was kept there a long time while a nun was being buried ; how at last she returned with a "wonder-working picture ;" but in spite of all her prayers the Heavenly Queen, who had helped so many others, would not wipe away her tears. Suddenly she seizes the horse's bridle, and gets ready to start homewards. But again a dreamy sensation comes over her. She leans against a pine, and remains standing there, holding the axe in her hand, but scarcely breathing, "without a thought, a groan, a tear." Throughout the forest reigns the silence of the grave, the frost ever growing stronger the while.

All about his domains goes Frost the chieftain, seeing whether the waters have been firmly bridged, and the roads made level and hard, and the pines decked out with ornaments of snow. From tree to tree he bounds, till at last he reaches that against which Darya is leaning, and from amidst its branches he sings of his invincible might. "Art thou warm ?" he asks her from the summit of the pine. "I am warm," answers the widow, shuddering as the cold takes hold of her. Lower down among the branches comes Frost, lower still, ever waving his magic mace. At last he is by her side. She feels his kiss on her eyes and lips. It seems to her that her husband is with her ; that it is his dear caress that she feels. From her numb hands down drops the axe ; and

her bloodless lips there plays a smile. She dreams that it is warm harvest-time. Back from the corn-field comes her husband, bringing home a load of golden sheaves. Then he goes back again, the children riding with him on the cart, while she looks after them with a smile, shading the sun from her eyes with her hand. Then a song arises in the distance; and as the dreaming Darya listens to it, the last shades of sorrow die away from her tranquil face. Still and passionless as the trees around her, she stands like a statue beneath the cold blue sky.

Not a sound is heard! Stand there and feel how your heart is subdued by that dead silence.

Not a sound! But thou art gazing at the vault of heaven, and the sun, and the forest, full of wonders, decked in its garb of frosted silver,

Utterly passionless, though dazzling with an ineffable charm. But hark! a sudden rustle is heard. A squirrel runs up the tree;

Springing from branch to branch of the pine, it throws down snow upon Darya. But Darya does not move. To Darya the frost has brought death in her enchanted sleep.

The sorrows of the Russian woman of the people are frequently described in eloquent words by Nekrasof. In the first part of the poem, of which a summary has just been given, he speaks of her thus:—

Three dreary lots has Fate to dispense. And the first is to wed a slave; and the second, to bear a slave; and the third, to obey a slave until death. And all these terrible lots have fallen to the share of the Russian woman.

Centuries have passed. All things have tended towards happiness. All things in the world have many a time changed. Only the stern lot of the peasant woman has God forgotten to change. And we are all agreed, that the type has degenerated of the once fair and strong Slavonian woman.

Fortuitous victim of Fate! Unseen, unheard hast thou suffered. Thy strivings and thy complainings hast thou not confided to the world.

But thou wilt tell them to me, my friend! From childhood hast thou been to me well known. Thou who art—incarnate fear! Thou who art—eternal weariness.

However, he continues, the type of the grand Slavonian woman has not entirely died out:—

Still are there women in the Russian villages, in whose faces is quiet dignity, in whose movements is graceful strength, whose gait and glance are those of a queen.

Of them say all who have eyes to see, "When she passes it is as when the sun shines! A look from her is as good as a rouble!"

They follow the same road as all the rest of our people. But to them sticks none of the mud of their poverty-stricken surroundings. She blossoms a rosy-cheeked beauty, tall and erect—comely in every dress, quick at all kinds of work.

On her sunburnt shoulders hang down the long plaits of her brown hair. Firm rosy lips cover her strong even teeth. When she becomes mistress of a household, all goes well within her gates, for she is always on the alert and busy:—

Clear and firm is her conviction that all salvation lies in work, and therefore are her stores always full, her children always well fed and healthy. When the family goes to church, she walks in front, bearing a babe enthroned on her breast, while beside her she leads her six-year-old boy. And home comes that picture to the heart of every one who loves the Russian people.

Unfortunately that picture, so far as its principal figure is concerned, is not one that very often greets the eye in Russia. Nekrasof has no doubt painted the portrait of his heroine from life, but his models can seldom have been so attractive. Among young Russian girls, it is true, especially in the southern provinces, there is often found one whose face and form may charm an admirer of the beautiful and the romantic, and her maiden life lends itself not unready to poetic treatment; but when she becomes a married woman, and her long braids of hair are hidden away under an uncomely kerchief, she and romance are usually parted forever. This fact Nekrasof states forcibly, in the poem called "The Troika." "A carriage and three" has just driven through a village, and its occupant, a young officer, has gazed with manifest admiration at a rustic beauty. She, in her turn, with a flush of pride on her cheek and a bright sparkle in her eye, looks after him down the road. To her the poet addresses himself. "It is no wonder he looked at thee," he says; "no one finds it hard to fall in love with thee. Playfully floats the rosy ribbon about thy hair as black as night. A tender down softens the rosy glow of thy embrowned cheek; from under thy arched brows teasing eyes look briskly forth." "Will thy life be full and complete?" he goes on to ask. "No, such will not be thy fate. Thou wilt be mated to a slovenly clown."

Girt under the armpits, will thy figure become ungraceful.

Thy exacting husband will beat thee, thy mother-in-law will torment thee.

Crushed by labour hard and black, wilt thou wither before thou hast fully blossomed. Thou wilt sink into a dull sleep that knows no waking. Thou wilt nurse children and toil and eat.

Soon on thy face, now full of life and animation, will appear an expression of stolid endurance and an unconscious, incessant dread.

And when thy dreary life-journey is over, they will lay in the damp grave thy uselessly expended strength, thy breast that has never known fostering warmth.

By way of a finale we may take the following sketch, descriptive of one of the many vicissitudes to which, in the days of serfdom, the lot of the Russian village maiden was liable. It is called "On the Road," and begins with a tired traveller's request that his *yamshtchik*, or driver, will cheer him by a song or story.

THE TRAVELLER.

I feel dreary! Do something to divert me, blithe driver. Chant me a stave, my friend, about recruitments and partings, or make me laugh at some absurdity, or tell me something you have seen. I shall be grateful for anything, brother.

THE DRIVER.

I'm not very lively, myself, master. My heart is heavy about my poor wretch of a wife. You see, sir, she was brought up from childhood in our seigneur's house, and educated along with our young mistress. She understood about needlework, you know, and embroidery, and she could read and play the piano—was up to all ladylike ways, in fact. As to her dress, it wasn't like that of our village sarafan-wearers. She went about in satin, for instance, and she might eat as much honey and *kasha* as she liked. She looked the real thing as much as any born lady. And it was not only we peasants who admired her, but a gentleman might have liked to marry her. (The tutor there fell in love with her, the coachman says.) But God didn't allot her good fortune, it seems. The gentry don't care much about servant girls.

Our young mistress married, and went to live at St. Petersburg. And when the master came back after his daughter's wedding he fell ill, and on Whitsun Eve gave back to God his gracious soul. Grusha* was left just like an orphan. A month later came the heir, went over the list of peasants, and changed labour-dues for money payments. By-and-by he came to Grusha. Whether she annoyed him in any way, or whether he merely thought there wasn't room for her in the house, that we never knew. But any-

how he sent her back to the village. It was a case, you see, of "Know your own place, wench!" The poor girl cried bitterly. It was very hard on her, you know, with her white hands and white face.

I happened to be just turned eighteen, then, so I had a piece of land given me—and Grusha to wife. Dear me, what a heap of troubles did not I come in for! She looked so unhappy, you know, and didn't know how to mow or see after the cow. It would be a sin to say she was idle; but the work never turned out well in her hands. When she was carrying wood or drawing water, she went about it as if she were working for a seigneur; so that one felt sorry for her sometimes. But what could one do? There was no cheering her up by giving her new clothes. The heavy shoes hurt her feet, she said, and she felt awkward in a sarafan. When strangers were present she kept up pretty well, but when she was alone she would cry like mad. The gentlefolks had spoiled her, you see. Otherwise she'd have been a hearty lass.

There's a picture she's always looking at, and then she's always reading some book or other. So I get a twinge of fright, sometimes, that she will spoil our boy too. She teaches him to read. She washes him, cuts his hair, combs it every day, just as if he were a little gentleman. And she won't beat him; won't even let me beat him. But she won't spoil the little rogue much longer. She's as thin and as white as a chip, you see, and she does more than she has strength for. In a whole day she won't eat more than two spoonfuls of porridge. In a few weeks more I'm afraid I shall have to lay her in the grave! Why it is so I cannot think. God knows I haven't worn her out with constant labour; I've always seen she had plenty of food and clothes; I never scolded her without a cause, and as to beating her—why I almost never beat her, never except when my hand had drink in it.

THE TRAVELLER.

That will do, driver, thank you! You've completely cured me of my low spirits.

W. R. S. RALSTON.

From Macmillan's Magazine.

THE LITERARY MALTREATMENT OF MUSIC.

MUSICIANS cannot help now and then being struck by the strange and not always explicable mistakes made by some of our greatest writers in connection with music. They may, perhaps, be reminded to return that if authors frequently make blunders—or, to be precise, write nonsense—on the subject of music, musicians have sometimes shown remarkable ignorance

* Agrippina or Agrabena.

of literature. Ivanoff, the famous Russian tenor, after seeing Beaumarchais' "*Barbier de Séville*" at the Théâtre Français, told Rossini, as an interesting piece of news, that the French had turned his "*Barbieri*" into a comedy, and that it went remarkably well in its new form. Only the other day an eminent Italian vocalist in London, on being introduced to the eminent English vocalist, Mr. William Shakespeare, expressed much satisfaction at making the acquaintance of our great national dramatist, adding, in an aside, to a friend, "*Je ne le croyais pas si jeune.*" Passing from singers, whose chief business is the production of sound, to composers, who belong to the great family of artistic creators, it would be easy to cite instances of disregard shown by the latter in their musical settings, for the sense and meaning of words. An Italian Church-composer, not finding the words or syllables of the *Credo* sufficiently numerous for the melody to which he was adapting it, is said to have interpolated here and there such words as *ah* and *non*. Thus treated his profession of faith became, "*Credo, non credo, ah non credo in unum Deum.*" Another, as if to show that he at least understood the literal meaning of his words, introduced in the orchestral accompaniment of an *Agnus Dei* the conventional instruments of pastoral music. Balfe, in fitting a melody to Tennyson's "Come into the garden, Maud," has strongly accentuated the first word—on which no accent should fall. It is true that the very fertile, though not always original, composer had borrowed his theme, note for note, from Macbeth's principal air in Verdi's opera of "*Macbetto*," which may account for some manipulation of the words. Wallace, in a trio in "*Mari-tana*" composed to the words, "Turn on, old Time, thy hour-glass," has made "time" a word of seven syllables, and "hour" a word of two. A French vocalist under the first republic found himself condemned not to extend one syllable (and that syllable with an *i* in the middle!) over seven notes, but to deliver six syllables where the composer had only furnished music for one. In Montigny's "*Déserteur*" one of the most popular airs begins with this line:—

Le roi passait et le tambour battait aux champs.

All mention of "*le roi*" being forbidden, "*la loi*" was found a convenient substitute for the banished word. "*Vive la loi*" did duty for "*Vive le roi*," and in "*Le Déserteur*" "*la loi*" was described as

passing in procession between lines of faithful soldiers. A singer who was unable to realize the idea of an abstract conception riding on horseback or in a carriage, replaced—

La loi passait et le tambour battait aux champs,
by—

Le pouvoir exécutif passait et le tambour
battait aux champs.

But the greatest sinners of all in connection with music are our own librettists. In the English version of "*Dinorah*," Co-rentin, the Breton peasant, having to say in verse, and to a particular tune, that some men are brave and others are not, is made to state the case by means of symbols in the following terms—

A was born to live in war and thunder,
B is otherwise and so is C.

The author of these curious lines makes the bad character in Sterndale Bennett's "*May Queen*" say, in reference to the heroine's beauty (at the beginning of the trio):—

Can that eye a cottage hide?

the meaning of the strangely inverted inquiry being, "Can a girl with such eyes as yours consent to remain hidden in a cottage?"

Much better, as regards simplicity and sense, than "A was born," etc., or "Can that eye a cottage hide," are the following lines written by an ingenious Frenchman as an additional verse to "God save the king." When at the time of the Restoration Louis XVIII. was conveyed from Dover to Calais on an English man-of-war by the Duke of Clarence, afterwards William IV., a banquet was given at Calais in honour of the English lord high admiral; "God save the king" was sung, and this new stanza was tacked on to the anthem for the occasion:—

God save noble Clarence,
Who brings her king to France,
God save Clarence!
He maintains the glory
Of the British navy,
O God, make him happy;
God save Clarence!

The rhymes in these remarkable verses, to a French ear, or rather to a French eye, are probably not bad. It must be admitted, however, that the rhythm, though nearly perfect to the eye, leaves something to be desired by the ear. The words might easily enough be sung to the tune of "God save the king;" but it is diffi-

cult to imagine singers giving them with much spirit.

In "*Arsinoë*," "the first opera," according to Addison, "that gave us a taste for Italian music," Clayton, who afterwards wrote music for Addison's "*Rosamond*," and whose works were represented by Steele as a sort of "music of the future," before which Handel's paltry productions must eventually sink into insignificance, had to set the following verses:—

Queen of darkness, sable night,
Ease a wandering lover's pain;
Guide me, lead me,
Where the nymph whom I adore,
Sleeping, dreaming,
Thinks of love and me no more.

In the "repeat" of the melody which Clayton fitted to these lines, or to which the lines had to be more or less satisfactorily adjusted, it suited the composer to stop at line the fourth; so that the singer ended the piece, without completing it, by exclaiming—

Guide me, lead me,
Where the nymph whom I adore!

With a similar disregard of the meaning of his author, Shield, who composed a century later than Clayton, has travestied Shakespeare by punctuating him as follows:—

O happy happy happy fair,
Your eyes are load-stars
And your tongue sweet air.

But to return to Mr. Clayton, "The style of this music," he had explained in an address to the public, "is to express the passions, which is the soul of music." Clayton, apart from music, was probably a clever and agreeable man; and taking him at his own valuation, or judging him, perhaps, by his general ability, the contributors to "*The Spectator*" came to the conclusion that he was all he believed himself to be. They could follow Clayton in his plausible arguments and in the indignation he expressed at Handel's venturing to introduce a foreign entertainment into England; while Handel's music on the other hand said nothing to them. They did not hesitate then to give the publicity of "*The Spectator*" to a letter in which Clayton not only proposed to start concerts of British music—or rather of his own so-called Italian music "grafted upon English poetry"—but declared "that favouring our design is no less than reviving an art, which runs to ruin by the

utmost barbarism under an affectation of knowledge." The good opinion which Addison and Steele had formed of Clayton as a musician reminds one a little of the admiration felt for Berlioz, and indirectly for Berlioz's music, by Heine and Théophile Gautier—who could not fail to be charmed by Berlioz's wit. It reminds one much more of the popularity enjoyed by Thackeray's "Sir George Thrum," the sturdy representative of native musical talent, whose "downright English stuff," was contrasted with the "infernal twaddle and disgusting slipslop" of Donizetti. Without being a musician, Thackeray was artist enough to perceive the difference between the music of Donizetti, an Italian composer of the second class, and that of Sir George Thrum, a composer of no class.

Thackeray, with genius and intelligence equally developed, could not write absurdly, in however small a degree, on music, or on any other subject. But he could make mistakes; and it once occurred to him that Beethoven had composed a very beautiful piece, called "*The Dream of St. Jerome*," of which no mention is made in any catalogue of Beethoven's works. Beethoven might have produced a piece under that title; but, as a matter of fact, he did not. In due time, however—a proof that Thackeray's conception had nothing ridiculous in it—the dream became a reality; and "*St. Jerome's Dream*," composed by L. van Beethoven, may now be purchased of all respectable music-sellers. It is said that one day an admirer of Thackeray and of Beethoven, anxious to learn which of Beethoven's compositions had given so much pleasure to the great novelist, asked timidly, but with an air of conviction, at a West-end music-shop, for "Beethoven's '*Dream of St. Jerome*.'" After a little delay, and probably a brief consultation, the answer returned to the enterprising amateur was to the effect that "*The Dream of St. Jerome*" might be had in a few days, but that it was for the moment out of print." It had, of course, been explained that this perfectly imaginary work was spoken of in "*The Adventures of Philip*" (chap. xxxii). And, as if to do honour to Thackeray's fancy, a piece, or portion of a piece, by Beethoven, was engraved under the title, which Thackeray had probably heard applied, half in pleasantry, half in earnest, to some other piece by the same master. In families where music is much cultivated a composition may easily get to be known by a name of which the significance will be by no means apparent

to those unacquainted with its private origin.

After all Thackeray's musical mistake is not worse than a literary mistake made for the first time many years ago by the great Wagner, and dutifully repeated again and again by his faithful followers. Figaro, in "*Le Barbier de Séville*," says, as he improvises the words of his air (in the situation where Rossini has placed "*Largo al factotum*,") "*Ce qui ne vaut pas la peine d'être dit on le chante*." Herr Wagner and the Wagnerites, for "*Ce qui ne vaut pas la peine d'être dit*" substitute "*Ce qui est trop sot pour être dit*;" and assign the remark, as improved by themselves, not to Beaumarchais' Figaro speaking in jest, but to Voltaire speaking seriously in his own character.

Thackeray is not the only English novelist of the present day who, to an unknown piece of music, has given an unknown name. In Mr. Black's "Three Feathers," when Wenna goes up to the house to see the old lady, she sits down to the piano, and afterwards, in telling her sister what she has done, says that she played two "*Lieder*" and "Beethoven's Farewell"—under which title, when the piece has been sufficiently asked for, we may hope some day to see a companion to "The Dream of St. Jerome" brought out. Very different in character from these errors as to the titles of works, or as to the existence of works which were never composed, is a mistake which disfigures one of the masterpieces of modern fiction. In the novel in question a "perfect accord of descending fifths," is dwelt upon with a sort of rapture. Now irrespective of all rules on the subject, it would be sufficient to try an "accord of descending fifths" on the piano to see whether or not such a thing is even tolerable. It is to be feared, however, that in the highest literary circles a taste for sequences of fifths is on the increase. In a volume of very charming songs by one of the most popular novelists of the day the purple cover is ostentatiously adorned with a sequence of ascending fifths printed in notes of gold.

Attention having once been called to the matter, it need hardly be said that "accords of fifths" in music are neither desirable nor undesirable, but simply not to be thought of. Lucy and Stephen no more sang such intolerable sounds than Jules Janin saw live red lobsters—except, indeed, in his mind's eye—when in a celebrated flight of fancy he described the lobster as the "cardinal of the sea."

Alfred de Musset placed Andalusians in Barcelona—

Avez-vous vu dans Barcelone,
Une Andalouse au teint bruni?

But the Duke of Clarence ("God save noble Clarence" etc.) went far beyond Musset, and proved himself as a natural historian at least the equal of Jules Janin. Growing enthusiastic about the clearness of the sea at Malta, his Royal Highness is reported to have exclaimed: "At twenty fathoms, sir, you could see the bottom red with lobsters, by G—d." There may be red lobsters in the sea (dead ones) as there may be "sequences of fifths" in music. But neither would be delightful.

In "Uncle Tom's Cabin" not only musicians and amateurs of music, but all readers must have been astonished to find one of the personages playing the piano "with an airy and bird-like touch." The bird as a pianist might form a companion picture to *la loi* as an equestrian.

Ouida, in a lively account of the sufferings to which the officers of her Majesty's brigade of guards are exposed during the London season, makes one of these unfortunate gentlemen so far forget himself at an evening party as to propose to a young lady "between two movements of a symphony." Ouida or her hero may have had peculiarly bad luck; but as a general rule nothing so formidable as a symphony is presented at an evening party.

To the poet a good deal is permitted. When, however, the poet appears in the character of novelist, and introduces a musical performance, he ought not to make his players execute a work under impossible conditions. Haydn wrote music of almost all kinds. But he never composed quartets for "three violins and a flute." Yet we are assured, in "*Les Misérables*," that on the occasion of Valjean's banquet "three violins and a flute played in an undertone quatuors of Haydn."

It may be said that if Victor Hugo, in an admirable romance, has thought fit to misrepresent the character of Haydn's quartets, his object in writing "*Les Misérables*" was not to teach music. But, author of the finest romances, the finest lyric poems, the only fine plays, and the best libretto of the period—his own arrangement of "*Esmeralda*" as an opera-book—it is to be regretted that he should have encouraged by his example a species of

carelessness in which it is only too easy to follow him.

In England no disgrace is attached to total ignorance of music and everything connected therewith. But when an author undertakes to enlighten the world on the subject of music and musicians he ought not to mistake a celebrated dramatic singer for a painter. Nor in speaking of a vocalist so entirely unknown to him, ought he to assume an air of familiarity with the man in that pictorial character which never belonged to him; nor, above all, ought he to make errors of this kind in a book treating not only in a general manner of music, but also in a special manner of "music and morals." In a work published under the title just cited, the author transports us "through the kindness of Dr. Liszt," to what he calls a *levée*—held late in the evening—at Chopin's rooms in the Chaussée d'Antin. Among Chopin's visitors is Adolphe Nourrit, the famous tenor, whom Mr. Haweis mistakes for a painter. "Adolphe Nourrit," writes our author, "the noble and ascetic artist, stands apart. He has something of the grandeur of the Middle Ages about him. In his later years he refused to paint any subject which was wanting in true dignity." That is more than can be said of our guide to morals in connection with music. Painting, after Liszt, a gathering at Chopin's he produces a flagrantly incorrect copy of a very flashy original. Nourrit is said to have suggested to Meyerbeer the scene of the grand duet which closes so effectively the fourth act of "*Les Huguenots*," and to have given valuable hints to Donizetti for "*I Martiri*." He, in fact, showed himself in many ways an "artist," but not as he is here imagined, an artist with the brush. The unfortunate "artist," when he found his power as a singer forsaking him, committed suicide. It is almost needless to say that he was at no period of his life a painter.

Mr. Haweis does not think much of the opera as a form of art. He has a perfect right to argue that the musical drama is neither drama nor music; and, in spite of its existence, that it cannot exist. But, as a writer on music and on the connection between music and morals, he ought not to represent Mendelssohn as condemning the moral tendency of a scene in Meyerbeer's "*Robert le Diable*," when the scene which Mendelssohn refers to in the letter quoted in "Music and Morals" belongs to Auber's "*Fra Diavolo*." Besides confounding "*Fra Diavolo*" with

"*Robert le Diable*," and mistaking the first dramatic singer of his time for a painter of religious pictures, the same writer declares it to be "well known that the opening to the 'William Tell' overture was written for a celebrated violoncello at Vienna," whereas it is notorious that "William Tell," overture and all, was composed for the Grand Opera of Paris. A writer who makes such mistakes as these cannot fail, in the course of five hundred and odd pages, to make a great many more of the same kind. In fact he speaks of the "yodelling" of Polish peasants; describes the infant Gluck as "William Christopher Ritter von Gluck" (as though Gluck had been born a knight); makes Mozart's canary sing "in G sharp" (whereas all the poor bird did was to sing an air in which G sharp occurs); cites Oecolampadius (a contemporary of Luther) as one of the biographers of Mendelssohn; and says mildly of Salieri, who was suspected of having poisoned Mozart, that he "did not appreciate him." The majority, however of Mr. Haweis's errors are not at all amusing. He makes Mendelssohn die in 1847 and visit England in 1848. He assigns Beethoven's "*Adelaida*" to the year 1801 instead of 1794; and after referring to the composer's passion for the Countess Guicciardi, observes that in the immortal song of "*Adelaida*"—composed seven years before—"we can almost hear the refrain of 'My angel! my all! my life!'" (15) and such like passionate utterances.

If an author who professes to instruct and enlighten the public in regard to music—and who is himself a cultivated amateur—commits blunders, not by the dozen or the score, but by hundreds, it was scarcely to be expected that Charles Lamb, who did not care for music, would write very accurately about it. "Much less in voices," he says in the "Chapter on Ears," "can I distinguish a soprano from a tenor. Only sometimes the thorough-bass I contrive to guess at, from its being supereminently harsh and disagreeable." It is to be regretted that gentle Elia did not content himself with the simple and sufficient word "bass;" "thorough-bass" meaning something very different from what he intended to express. Elsewhere, in "Imperfect Sympathies," Lamb, who frankly admitted that he could not "distinguish a soprano from a tenor," speaks of the Hebrew enthusiasm of Braham—who, it need scarcely be said, was a tenor—breaking out as he sang

"When the children of Israel passed through the Red Sea." There are, however, no such words in the tenor part of the oratorio.

Among other unfounded charges made against Prince Bismarck, the illustrious statesman has been accused of describing Beethoven's "Sonata in A flat" as Beethoven's "Sonata in A." In that interesting novel of contemporary political life, "For Sceptre and Crown," the Prussian foreign minister (*anno* 1866) cannot make up his mind to declare war against Austria. Much agitated he calls upon the eminent pianist and politician, Herr von Keudell, to calm him by playing the funeral march from—as the author, or at least the English translator, puts it—"Beethoven's 'Sonata in A.'" Prince Bismarck has declared more than once in the Prussian Chamber that he never said "Might before right;" and that his famous remark about the efficacy of blood and iron was not his own, but was quoted from a well-known German poem. It would be interesting to hear from Prince Bismarck's own lips that he never spoke of the piece, which he probably knows as "the sonata with the funeral march," as "Beethoven's 'Sonata in A.'"

Some writers, in dealing with musical matters, commit errors of so simple a nature that one scarcely likes to raise a laugh at their expense. The pedant who makes a mistake ought never to be spared. But there was, at least, no affectation of technical knowledge in the observations addressed to the chief of a French municipality by a secretary, who, commissioned to report as to the manner in which the local theatre was managed, wrote: "The conductor of the orchestra has not played a note since his arrival. If he contents himself with making gestures, I suggest that he be discharged."

Nothing droller than the above is to be found even in that great repertory of moral and musical blunders from which several choice specimens have already been presented. For the best collection of similar mistakes brought together with derisive intention Berlioz's "*Les Grotesques de la Musique*" should be consulted. It is to be observed, however, that whereas the English writer goes wrong only when he speaks of composers, singers, musical historians, and musical works, without showing any fundamental ignorance of music as an art, the errors which Berlioz thought worthy of his attention are those of persons to whom, musicians as they thought themselves, the first principles of

music must have been unknown. It will be enough to quote from Berlioz's entertaining work the substance of two anecdotes. A young lady—says the French composer whose literary productions every one can admire—buying a piece of music at Brandus's, was asked whether the fact of its being "in four flats" would be any obstacle to her playing it. She replied that it made no difference to her how many flats were marked, as beyond two she scratched them out with a penknife.

Our second anecdote, after Berlioz, is of a dancer who, rehearsing with the orchestra and finding that something went wrong, thought the fault must lie with the musicians. "What key are you playing in?" he inquired. "E," replied the conductor. "I thought so," continued the dancer; "you must transpose the air. I can only dance to it in D." What would Berlioz have said could he have seen in one of the most beautiful poems in our language these melodious but inaccurate lines?—

All night have the roses heard

The flute, violin, bassoon;

All night has the casement jessamine stirr'd

To the dancers dancing in tune.

It is scarcely necessary to point out that dancers, however perfectly they may dance in *time*, cannot, unless they make music with their feet, dance in *tune*. Berlioz, by the way, as a great master of instrumentation, might not have liked the composition of the little orchestra—"flute, violin, bassoon." But the bassoon was adopted, years ago, into English poetry, and, thanks to Coleridge and to Tennyson, will remain there.

What, nevertheless, is to be said about Coleridge and his "loud bassoon," except that in the first place the bassoon is not loud? Out of "The Ancient Mariner" no one ever heard a "loud bassoon." Having been long accustomed to it, however, people have got to like it, and now would not, on any account, see the "loud bassoon" replaced by the "tender trumpet," or the "gentle ophicleide;" which for the rest would suit neither the rhythm nor the rhyme of the poem. There is, however, another solemn and sonorous instrument which might have served the poet's purpose. The trombone, since it has been associated with the statue of the commander, in "Don Juan"—who never speaks except to an accompaniment of trombones—has possessed an unearthly character; and, vigorously played, there can be no question as to its being "loud." If indeed it were permitted to take with

Coleridge a tithe of the liberties which every one is allowed to take with Shakespeare, some commentator of "The Ancient Mariner" would doubtless have rewritten the last four lines of the "loud-bassoon" stanza with "loud bassoon" replaced more or less ingeniously by "loud trombone."

The author of "Music and Morals" supposes the life of Mendelssohn to have been written by a contemporary of Luther. An anachronism, however, is a comparatively mild form of absurdity. Shakespeare is full of anachronisms as of other inconsistencies. From Macbeth to Joan of Arc, all Shakespeare's serious characters quote Plutarch, and all his comic characters allude to affairs of the day—not their own day, but Shakespeare's. The old painters, too, committed anachronisms in regard to costumes and accessories of all kinds—including musical instruments. Apollo, the Muses, Orpheus, are represented playing the violin and other instruments by no means of their date; but at least they play them in a becoming manner. The instruments, too, are correctly drawn, and are those of the period at which the pictures were painted. In Paul Veronese's "Marriage of Cana," in the Louvre, the musicians play on stringed instruments of various kinds, such as the viola and violoncello. Domenichino's "St. Cecilia," also in the Louvre, plays the violoncello; and it is to be observed that she plays from notes which are held for her by a young angel who bears a strange resemblance to Mr. Buckstone. Many artists in the present day paint impossible instruments, and represent musicians playing under impossible circumstances. A few months ago a picture might have been seen at Christie's, the work of the late Mr. John Philip, in which there was a violin without bridge or strings. Mr. Du Maurier exhibited the other day in *Punch* a most gracefully drawn sestet party in which the performers had no music before them. Joachim will play his own part in Beethoven's or Mendelssohn's violin concerto without notes; it is the fashion just now for all our pianoforte soloists to play without notes. But the notion of concerted pieces being executed by all concerned without notes is preposterous. In a "Music Party" by an old Italian, Flemish or French painter, it would be as impossible to find players without notes, as to find a violin without bridge or strings.

Are no mistakes made, it may perhaps

be asked, except in connection with music? Are not the technical terms of pictorial act abused by critics of painting? Do not amateur strategists commit blunders in describing the operations of war? The answer to these questions is that though every one is liable to make mistakes, no one runs the risk of making ridiculous ones unless he travels beyond the region of what he knows, or has tolerable reason for thinking he knows. As regards music, Fielding, without being a musician, knew that those were impostors who decried the genius of Handel in the interest of his envious British rivals. Similarly Thackeray was not to be deceived by the laudations given by the Bludyers of his time to Sir George Thrum at the expense of Donizetti. But neither Fielding nor Thackeray thought it necessary to go into ecstasies about the "accord of descending fifths." Mozart, moreover, Mendelssohn, Weber, Spohr, were able in their letters to speak of musical performances without resorting to technicalities; and there are excellent reasons why this rule—followed as a matter of course by the great masters in their familiar correspondence—should be observed by writers who know enough about music to employ musical expressions, but not enough to avoid employing them incorrectly.

H. SUTHERLAND EDWARDS.

From The Spectator.

A MESSAGE FROM ST. KILDA TO LORD J. MANNERS.

WE wonder if Mr. Donald Cameron, of Lochiel, groom-in-waiting to the queen, and unopposed member for Inverness-shire, knows where St. Kilda is. If he does not, as it is probable that, like the British government, the lord-advocate of Scotland, the postmaster-general, and the majority of mankind he does not, he ought to be "heckled" next time he appears on the hustings as to his knowledge of his own county; and if he does he ought to be "heckled" much more thoroughly as to his neglect of the imperative interests of a most interesting section of his constituents. The people of St. Kilda have been totally forgotten by the British government, and he has not roared in their defence. It is all his fault. So far as we can make out, after much diligent study, the island of St. Kilda is by a legal fiction a part of the parish of Harris, the southern peninsula of Lewis, from which it is

some thirty miles distant; and as Harris is included in Inverness-shire we presume St. Kilda is in that county too, and if so, the duty of defending St. Kilda from official oppression devolves on Mr. Donald Cameron, who will, we trust, when he has heard the story, prefer constituents to conservatism, and either scold or persuade Lord John Manners into remembering that St. Kilda, small as it is, is part of the British Isles, and that to omit any part of the British Isles from the purview and scope of British postal arrangements is a grave dereliction of duty. Seriously, the omission of St. Kilda from postal arrangements, though probably accidental, and due to the exclusion of the island from post-office maps, involves severe oppression to very worthy Scotchmen, and ought to be immediately remedied.

St. Kilda is a very small—three thousand acres—very barren, very remote little island of the Hebrides, planted in a melancholy and extremely riotous ocean, so far to the westward that it has been found inconvenient to include it in the majority of maps, and it has in all seriousness been totally forgotten by the British government. If a murderer appeared among its population, they would have to hang him themselves, if there were wood enough for a gallows—which there is not—for they cannot get to Inverness. Not only is there no official on the place, but no one ever goes there, there is no delivery of the mails—not even once a month or once a quarter—and there is absolutely no regular communication kept up with the county of Inverness, to which the island is legally supposed to belong. The people are too poor to keep a boat large enough to cross the thirty miles of rough sea which intervenes between them and the nearest land, the place is out of the track of steamers, and except for one single day in the year, when an *employé* of the owner, Mr. Macleod, of Dunvegan, goes to levy £60 of rent, and make what profit he can of fish and feathers, the island is as unvisited as if it were in another planet, except by occasional yachtsmen and tourists, who, however, for generations back have never remained for more than a few hours. Lately, however, Mr. Sands, an artist with a love for solitude and for out-of-the-way experiences, made his way there, and remained on the island seven weeks, living in a cottage by himself, sketching the natives, and apparently practising for his own solace on the bagpipes; and his account of its people, simple and unpretentious as it is, has a sin-

gular pathos. He found the island inhabited by some seventy-three persons, remains of a rather larger number who had been severely visited by the smallpox, and who at first were inclined to fear that he might bring some kind of infectious disorder with him. The Free Church of Scotland, however, which, to do it justice, never shrinks from its duty when apparent to itself, has planted a minister even in St. Kilda, to be guide, philosopher, friend, and king to the poor people; and the minister, Mr. Mackay, the only man who talks English, does his duty with a will, standing there, Mr. Sands says as permanent sentry, to keep sin and misfortune out of St. Kilda; and as he exerted himself to remove their apprehensions, Mr. Sands received a warm welcome, and a great many presents of the only fuel, peat turf. The islanders, indeed, so far from becoming savage in their isolation, have become refined by it, and form a community resembling in many respects the Pitcairn Islanders. Crime is absolutely unknown. They are all Free Churchmen, and all communicants; they observe the Sabbath with a more than Scotch rigidity; they contribute no less than £20 a year to the Sustentation Fund, a sum equal to a rate of 6s. 8d. in the pound on their rental; and all read the Scriptures. Many of them can repeat from memory long chapters of the Gaelic Bible, they never fight, and they are studiously and almost superstitiously careful about giving offence to each other. They are so united, the six families of the island being of course closely related, that they are able to meet every morning and decide in council on the day's work, and they are unceasingly industrious:—

During three months of winter the men weave rough cloth,—tweeds and blanketing, of which, besides providing clothes for themselves, they export a considerable quantity. They vary this sedentary occupation by going to fish when the weather permits. In spring, they scale the crags and visit the adjacent islands for eggs and birds, and cultivate their plots of ground. Wherever one rambles, one sees some proof of their diligence. Every little spot of earth on the stony hills that will yield a crop is enclosed with a stone fence and cultivated. And even where the soil is too thin to be productive in itself, it is artificially deepened, by shovelling on it the thin soil adjacent. These beds or ridges are called “lazy bits,” although they are worthy of a better name. They preserve the ashes of their turf fires for manure, mixing with it the entrails and carcasses of fowls.

The women are as industrious as the men,

doing all the work which many years ago was done for them by their horses — now extinct — herding their eighteen cattle and three hundred sheep, making cheese, spinning thread, snaring puffins on dangerous islets, and doing all the housework. They are fine, stalwart men and women, but they have given up dancing and the singing-matches of which they were formerly fond, have forgotten their legends, and have abandoned all sports, even swimming, and seem, if we understand Mr. Sands' account, stricken with a kind of melancholy natural to people under such circumstances, who have never seen a tree, never tasted fruit of any kind, could not distinguish a horse from a dromedary, and have lived for years under some strange doom as to their children: —

Macaulay says, "The St. Kilda infants are peculiarly subject to an extraordinary kind of sickness. On the fourth, fifth, or sixth night after their birth, many of them give up sucking; on the seventh, their gums are so clenched together that it is impossible to get anything down their throats. Soon after this symptom appears, they are seized with convulsive fits, and after struggling against excessive torments, till their little strength is exhausted, die generally on the eighth day." This mysterious illness still prevails, and if the cause is not speedily discovered, this interesting community will soon become extinct.

As the St. Kilda children, when removed to Harris, escape the distemper, it is probably due to the mothers' diet, which consists principally of barley-meal and roasted sea-birds, the islanders having a prejudice against fish, which is not, perhaps, so unreasonable as Londoners, who eat salt-water fish chiefly as a luxury, are apt to imagine. The St. Kildans, fancy, like the people of the Eastern seas, that fish diet causes skin-disease, which may possibly be true. The rank puffin-flesh, however, seems to strengthen the few children who survive, for they grow up tall and healthy, are singularly bold cragsmen, are perfectly sober, a sure sign of health of stomach, and will dare any precipice in their search for their game, the sea-birds, with which the island and the neighbouring rocks abound, and on which they live. They used to use the heads and necks of the solan-geese for shoes, but they have given that up now as uncivilized, though they still sweep the floor with a goose's wing. The women even visit the adjacent islets, and there, wholly unaided by men, catch the puffins in hundreds, barrelling their bodies for winter food and collecting the feathers for the owner's factor, who has established

a kind of monopoly of the island produce. He and he alone, in his annual visit, buys the fish and the feathers and whatever there is to sell, and deducting the rent and the price of the few articles they require, gives the people the balance, with which they buy the little they attempt to import and support their church. They buy but little except a few bottles of whiskey for medicine, living on the sea-birds and their eggs for food, weaving their own clothing, and for the ornaments which the women cannot wholly lack beating out copper pennies for brooches, using the island peat for fuel, and for light burning the oil spit at them by the fulmar petrels: —

The fulmar petrel is about the size of a medium-sized gull, which, with the exception of the bill (which is strong and hooked at the point), he very much resembles in appearance. He has long wings, which he keeps extended when in the air, and a light, graceful flight. He seldom moves a pinion, but glides in curves and circles, as though to keep aloft did not cost him an effort. He frequents the island of St. Kilda, and chooses a lofty habitat on the stupendous cliffs, and builds his nest on the grassy ledges. This bird lays only one egg, and the young one is ready to fly about the end of July. When caught, the fulmar ejects about a pint of malodorous oil from his nostrils, aiming it at the faces of his captors, who thrust his head into the dried stomach of a solan-geese, and so preserve the liquid, which they burn in their lamps, and also export in barrels.

These islanders have only one grievance, the one to which we have alluded, but it is a very heavy one. They are too poor to buy a big boat, and having no communication with Scotland, they are absolutely at the mercy of the factor, who sells them all they require and buys from them all they have at his own prices. He seems to be a decent person, not taking more advantage than might be expected, but the islanders think if they had a boat, or could even send things in a mail-boat, say, once a month to Lewis, they might have more comfortable lives. They are capital oarsmen, and if the post-office would give them a boat would row it for themselves for the monthly communication, and so let poor Mr. Mackay, the minister, have his newspaper a month old, and at all events a chance of a letter from one of the few families who have left St. Kilda for the south or the colonies, and who now have not even a possibility of communicating with their friends. The people pay taxes, buying whiskey, and they are entitled to be recognized by the

post-office, and if we were Mr. Donald Cameron, member for Inverness-shire, including St. Kilda, Lord John Manners should have an uncomfortable life of it until their claim was recognized. Perhaps it may be some claim on the postmaster-general's sympathies that the St. Kildans are all exceedingly polite, so polite that they will on the slightest hint even leave off the luxury of boring. They think it polite to visit a stranger and talk to him:—

In the evening, about twenty women in a body paid me a visit, each bringing a burden of turf in her plaid, which they piled up in a corner of the room as a gift. After standing for a few minutes with pleasant smiles on their good-natured faces, they departed, with a kindly "*Feasgar math libh!*" I was subsequently honoured with frequent calls from the fair sex, and like misfortunes, they never came singly, but in crowds. I had still more frequent visits from the men, who also came all together if they came at all. Their visits were no doubt kindly meant; but as they all talked, or rather bawled, at one time, and with powerful lungs, I was almost driven distracted, and at length, to drown the din, seized the pipes (the largest size) and played a *piobrachd* with all the variations. But their good-nature rendered this strategy of no avail, as they listened with the utmost decorum until the performance was finished, and after thanking me politely, resumed their conversation as if it had never been interrupted. But after a time their visits suddenly ceased, from which I inferred that my half-jocular grumblings had been communicated to them by the minister. They, however, remained as friendly as ever.

People who are capable of taking a hint like that deserve a mail-bomb.

From The Queen.

GETTING OVER IT.

"You will get over it." Of all the stypics applied to a bleeding heart, a wounded soul, this sounds the most cruel, but is, in fact, the most wholesome. The reparative power of nature—that *vis medicatrix* of which schoolmen talked such marvellous nonsense in the days when ideas stood where facts stand now—is as true of the human mind as it is of the body; and shattered joy repairs itself, happiness is restored after mutilation, wounded affection is healed, and scars take the place of sores, all the same in the life of man as in the life of the world—in souls as in plants. It is wonderful, when we think of it, what we do get over; some of us, certainly, with more trouble, and taking a

longer time about it than others; but we all, with few exceptions, get over everything in time, and after the due amount of despair has been undergone, the due number of tears have been shed. . . .

It is easy to understand the passionate desperation of inexperienced youth when things go wrong, and disappointment comes to shatter the fairy shrine that hope and fancy had busied themselves in building up out of mist-wreaths and rainbows. The boy's fever-fit of despair when cruel parents interpose with their vile prosaic calculations of how much for house-rent, and how much for the butcher and baker, with the maddening deficit against the artist's income that is to provide food and a home for the beloved, and consequent denial of the daughter's hand, and interruption of all intercourse for the good of both—well, he thinks that he shall never get over it! It has broken his heart, destroyed his life, ruined his happiness forever, and there is nothing worth living for now, since Araminta is impossible. On her side, Araminta holds that it would be very nice to die and have done with the trouble of dressing for balls when Bertie is not there to see her—where, if he is there, he is not to dance with her, make sweet love in the conservatory, on the stairs, over the ices, the champagne. She thinks that, Bertie denied, her womanhood will have no more sweetness, bring her no more hope; she will never get over it—never, she says weeping to her *confidante*; but next year she is the radiant wife of a well-to-do stockbroker, and Bertie's artistry and love-making are no more substantial than her childish dreams of dolls and dolls's houses. Bertie too laughs at his former self, when he is a prosperous R. A., painting for guineas where formerly he was not paid in pence, and meets with Araminta at the private view—she a British matron with her quiver full and her brown hair grey; he also the father of a family, who has done with dreams even in his art, and who paints what will sell rather than what he thinks to be the best. Ah! the Berties and Aramintas of life get over their romances with humiliating celerity; and that *vis medicatrix* is sometimes quicker and more thorough in its operation than is quite satisfactory to the self-love of either. Submission to the inevitable is all very well in its way; but nobody likes that submission to be too entire when it involves the loss of himself.

The man's deeper disappointment—the woman's lifelong sorrow—even these are got over in a way, if the scars never heal

quite so kindly as with Bertie and Araminta. The older one grows, the deeper the wounds and the more pain they cause; though also, all of us, if wise, know that these wounds will be got over in time, that this pain will cease to ache. Nevertheless, for the time being, it is bad to bear, and the healing process is slower. Loss of fortune, of friends, of the dearest twin of your life — that second self, without whom it seems to you now that you cannot exist at all — the child from the mother's breast, the boy from the father's side, the prop of your old age, the companion of your soul and the joy of your eyes — all these go from you and fling you into the abyss of despair; but you get over it. A few years of troubled health may be, of tears starting readily to your eyes on small occasions, of the constant presence of gloom, and the daily thought of death — and then by degrees the clouds lift gradually, bit by bit, step by step, till you drift under the serene blue sky again, where, if all things are not as they were before the storm came which broke your flowers and beat down your temple, they are at the least beautiful to look at and good to live with. We grant it — great sorrows leave traces that are ineffaceable, and life is never entirely the same after them as it was before; but for all that, we get over even the deepest of these sorrows, and go on in the old grooves, with here and there sad places as reminders, but substantially everything the same as heretofore.

We get over even that loss of health and strength which leaves the citadel sound if the outworks are sapped and taken. The strong man and mighty hunter learns to live as a cripple — as a living death, paralyzed and bound to his chair for the remainder of his time. When it was first told him that he was maimed and ruined, he felt that he could not get over it — that he should die of the anguish which only strong men know. But the blessed *vis medicatrix*, which could do nothing for his body, does all for his mind, and he wears down into his sorrowful place, and gets over it in the best way he can. He finds consolation — "compensation," as Emerson says — and, like a vine pruned to the quick, puts forth fresh ten-

drils, new leaves, and even bears good fruit to the end. It is a daily amazement to his friends, who knew him in the days of his powerful manhood and lusty strength, to see how well he has got over it; but the power which is good for one thing is for the most part good for another, and the resignation of a strong man to the inevitable is as brave as used to be his courage in the presence of danger, as vital as was his energy against obstacles and difficulties. Men get over, too, even the discovery of hidden passages in their lives which they believed when first disclosed would ruin them forever — that slip some twenty years ago, when the books of the private little society of which he was the treasurer and secretary were found to have been tampered with, and moneys that had been paid in were never able to be drawn out by those to whom they belonged. Well! when that small lapse from the gentleman's code of honour and the vulgar rules of common honesty was made known, the delinquent thought for sure he should never get over it; but he did. He lived it down; success, based on fraud, grew as the old legends say Naples grew on the foundation of the magic egg laid there by "Virgilius." Let the egg break, and the goodly city would sink into the sea; let the fraud come full to the light, and the whole superstructure of opulence and respectability would fall to the ground. But it does not; and for the whispered revelations made in past time — he gets over them. So of the woman. She stands on the pinnacle of feminine honour. Her hair is grey, and her cheek has lost its roundness. She thought she should never have got over it, when years ago her letters were shown in the club, and her poor little secret was blown by gossip and scandal to all four corners of the earth. But she did in time, and now walks as smoothly as if no such misfortune had happened to her youth — as if she had never known what it was to be looked at askance, and spoken of with bated breath and small respect. She got over it; and now — who would suspect that she has ever had to ford so deep a river, to skirt by so terrible a precipice?